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THE GOVERNMENT AND THE U.S.S.R.

THE letters that reach us, the talk in the bus and the railway train, the meetings that are held up and down the country, the speculations about changes in the Government, all reflect a widespread anxiety about the German advance in the U.S.S.R. and about the part which Britain has played during the last four months. Let no one think that it is a "Left" anxiety; it is general among thoughtful people in the Services and throughout the public. Mr. Churchill, as the latest Gallup Poll published in the *News Chronicle* reveals, maintains his immense popularity; it is built on the realisation of his achievement in the dark days of last summer and in the affection and loyalty bred by his courage and personality. When the U.S.S.R. was attacked, his broadcast was inspired with a quality of leadership which confounded prejudice and cemented determination. Here, said Mr. Churchill, was one of the great climacterics of the war. The country responded; the press, Parliament and the public waited with exemplary patience to see how the Government would use this unique and unexpected opportunity. Only the irresponsible would suggest that the time has been altogether wasted; great progress has been made in the Battle of the Atlantic; British forces have been strengthened in North Africa and the Near East, Russian and British forces have joined in Iran, and, after an incomprehensible delay, the Beaverbrook-Harriman mission went to Moscow. To-day we have, as a solid bit of comfort, the knowledge that material promised to Stalin is actually reaching Archangel and being cleared for use on the Russian front. Movements on other fronts which may indirectly aid the U.S.S.R. may be heard of before long. But when all this is added up, the fact remains that our aid to Russia has never been enough substantially to affect the course of the war on the Russian Steppes; that the German pressure on Moscow is maintained in spite of a resistance that shows no sign of flagging, while in the South the enemy is at the gates of Rostov and is rapidly moving across the Crimea. At best we can only hope now to aid in sustaining the resistance of a Soviet Union deprived of a large part of its most fertile and highly industrialised territory. Had our authorities had at an earlier stage more faith in Russian resistance and had there been less suspicion and less prejudice our strategy might have taken a wiser and more hopeful course. Now, however, we must face the facts before us.

The immediate task, apart from other possible fronts, is to send all the aid within our power to the Russian battlefield. Sir John Anderson has made on this subject a cryptic utterance. Were he at liberty to disclose the Government's plans to mobilise our economic potential for the benefit of the Russian front, Sir John tells us that we should all be staggered. That much has been promised in Moscow, and that great efforts have been made to fulfil our pledges, we do not doubt. Unfortunately the strategy of aiding the Soviet Union by direct supply is severely limited by geographical facts. Many things have changed in Russia since the last war; the Soviet Union has immeasurably developed her own potential far back in the Urals, and to-day we have a new route to Russia—though a difficult and limited one—through the Caucasus. But there is still, unfortunately, truth in Mr. Churchill's analysis in the *World Crisis*, where he explains that the Dardanelles represented the hope of speedy victory through co-operation with Russia, since all the other supply routes were insufficient to maintain our eastern ally. In this war the loss of Crete has sealed that route. In those days, too, the Germans were not in Norway; Japan was on our side and there was no threat to Murmansk, Archangel or Vladivostok. We have to realise that at best our direct aid to the U.S.S.R. is limited to the potentialities of these second-class ports, depending on lengthy and inadequate land communications with the main theatre of war.

With the Soviet armies driven far back, and Hitler free to range the Continent and make speeches about his New Order, the Government is apparently assuming a long war, which will impose a severe strain on the home front. To maintain confidence Mr. Churchill should not assume that it is sufficient to continue with everything as it now is. The trust that is still felt in the Prime Minister does not extend to a number of his colleagues. He has made no more unhappy error than in maintaining Colonel Moore-Brabazon as Minister of Aircraft Production after a speech whose calamitous effect on the minds of thousands of workers is only disguised at the moment by their anxiety to produce to capacity for the sake of Anglo-Soviet collaboration. Nor is this country really in a mood to be lectured by Sir Samuel Hoare. Similarly the respect that people feel individually for Lord Halifax does not soften their anger and astonishment when he informs Hitler that he can safely strengthen his offensive in the East by denuding the West of Europe of tanks. Such a statement would only be pardonable if it were a double bluff. Mr. Churchill would change the entire atmosphere of this country for the better if he were to review his Cabinet, recall that party affiliations now count for little in the public mind, and freely appoint, in place of these men, others who are of proved ability and who have records as steady opponents of Fascism. Surely it must be clear to Mr. Churchill, as it is to the more lively minds of all classes and parties, that a new dynamic is loose in the world and that it will sweep us away as it swept away France in 1940 if we rely on men in key positions in the Government and on the staff who may have all the good qualities in the world, but lack an understanding of the nature of this war. It is tragically significant that we can recall no speech by a Government spokesman which suggests any realisation of the appalling tragedy of our inability or failure to aid the desperate revolts now being attempted on the Continent. Such men have no notion of collaborating with the real opponents of Fascism on the Continent.

Exactly similar considerations apply on the home front. This country has been ready for the economics of siege ever since the Government's promises of last summer. Morale will decline in conditions of inequality and "business

as usual." It rose, as never before, when the Prime Minister offered us "blood and tears." We do not behave as a country whose position is "desperate," as Mr. Bevin put it; the public listens with scepticism to warnings of invasion while our Air Force and Navy dominate the West and Hitler's forces are concentrated in the East. But if things are indeed desperate and invasion is likely, we need, as Mr. Shinwell rightly says, a very different economic and industrial organisation, and we desire to be led only by men who are fighting this war, not with an absurd hope of restoring the pre-war *status quo*, but with a clear-sighted determination to free the world both from the slavery of Nazidom and from the slavery of fear and want to which the pre-war Europe condemned the masses in every country.

The Nazi Terror

The killing of hostages in France as reprisal for the assassination of German officers has wakened new indignation in the West. The Chilean Ambassador has begged the Nazis to stay their hand. Of the two hundred hostages taken from Nantes and Bordeaux, fifty were shot at once in either town, and two were released because their families offered information about the assassins. There is, to our sense, something peculiarly horrifying in this Nazi device, with all its refinements of picking the hostages from among de Gaullists, trade union leaders, and Communists. For these the Vichy Government asked, thus shamefully disposing of its own opponents as well as anti-German elements. Our imagination, numbed to acceptance of the slaughter of civilians as an inevitable consequence of air warfare, can still be pierced by the agony of suspense of these men and their kin. After all, cruelty is more remembered in detail than in gross; the Massacre of Glencoe, if we remember rightly, had only thirty-eight victims, but it left an unfading scar on a nation's mind; the Burghers of Calais are more vividly remembered in France than the Black Prince's sack of Limoges. The Nazi Party includes no merciful Philippa; if anything stops the Germans it will be their astonished realisation that this killing is bad policy. Their surprise is natural. What, after all, is a hundred dead in France? The German Army massacred five hundred civilians in Crete alone. They are wiping out whole towns in Serbia. Their allies follow the same method; the Italians seem bent upon exterminating the two million Serbs of Croatia, and the Bulgars have killed thousands of Greeks in Thrace. These holocausts are the reply to popular resistance of the Axis occupation, a resistance which in many regions is far stronger since the attack upon Russia. But they are part of a policy far more coldly designed than mere reprisals; massacre is the quick way of destroying hostile populations; there are other methods. Starvation is one. Terboven's brutal statement that it was nothing to Germany if thousands or tens of thousands of Norwegians died of hunger in the war is something short of the fact. They are encouraged to die, by the confiscation of their foodstuffs. There is no meat in Norway, no fat in Poland, no bread almost in Greece. Then there is the export of men. The retention of the French prisoners is perhaps the greatest single instance. But every occupied country has to send its young men to work in Germany: they are allocated to the factories especially subject to British air raids. Thus three-quarters of a million have been taken from Poland, fifty thousand from Croatia. Even from Luxembourg, whose iron and steel industry is useful to Germany and has been taken over, numbers of skilled workmen have been forced to leave for work in the Reich. The Continental peoples regard this draining away of young men as aimed directly at lowering their birthrate, almost as much as providing man-power for the German war industries.

Home Front *(by an Industrial Correspondent)*

Rationing advances. The latest extension, to cover tinned meat and fish, is evidently based on the experience of the clothes rationing scheme, the same system of "points," without registration or restriction to any particular retailer being applied. Tinned foods have gone of late largely to the shop-crawler or the "good customer"—that is, mainly to the better-off classes, who have used them to supplement the meat ration. The new plan is therefore all to the good, and stands for a further small advance towards equality in the distribution of the available supplies. Taken in conjunction with recent prosecutions of well-known hotels and restaurants for breaches of the food regulations by buying supplies at more than the controlled prices, it does indicate a real tightening up. The clothes rationing scheme has worked well; and the "points" system first tried out there may very well be extended before long to a good many other things. Many stocks having now been mainly used up, the growing restrictions on production for the civilian market are bound to have a more than proportionate effect on supplies; and the Government, however reluctantly, may yet be forced to impose all-in restrictions on spending on any class of shop goods. Personally, I wish they would deal drastically with the restaurant problem—not by closing them down, but by taking a great many of them over and reopening them as British Restaurants where cheap, wholesome and quick meals can be got. This is the logical sequel to the canteen plan in the factories; and it would also stop a good deal of wasteful spending and impose a salutary check on the black markets in unrationed foods.

* * *

The engineering workers' wage applications have all been refused by the employers, who have cited the Government's White Paper on the wage question as their reason for rejecting the claims. The Trades Union Congress, it will be remembered, repudiated the policy laid down in the White Paper and issued a rejoinder to it. So now the battle is fairly joined. The Union demands will now go to the National Arbitration Tribunal, which, though it is in form an independent body, will in practice no doubt be influenced by the line the Government wishes it to take. If it rejects the Trade Union claims outright, that can hardly be the end of the matter. The Government, in the White Paper, admitted that there was a case for wage advances to some of the worse-paid workers, and also suggested that advances might be given in relation to corresponding increases in output. There may, accordingly, be some attempt to devise a scheme for bonuses on output, even if the general claim is denied. This would give rise to a good deal of difficulty; for in many cases the less-skilled workers can speed up production much more easily than the highly skilled, who cannot risk inaccuracy in key products without endangering the lives of the men—even if the bad work does get past the inspection department. The right way of meeting this problem would be to make wage-rates correspond more closely than they do to grades of skill. But wage-payments on munitions are in such a mess that this would involve a terrific upheaval. The whole problem could have been tackled with comparative ease early in the war.

* * *

I referred last week to the need for extending canteen facilities for industrial workers as well as school-feeding arrangements for children. The canteen position is still very unsatisfactory. The legal power to compel firms to provide canteens does not apply outside the war trades or, even in the war trades, to firms employing less than 250 workers; and what has actually been done in these trades falls a long way short of what Mr. Bevin's department has full power to enforce. I am told that the position in the docks has improved greatly since power was taken to compel Port Authorities to supply canteens. But the position in coal-mining remains very bad indeed; and in most of the smaller war factories, and in most factories of all sizes outside the war trades, nothing has been done. A recent survey made by the A.E.U. covering 1,000 war factories and shipyards, mainly the larger establishments, showed that nearly one-third of the total had still no canteens at all. The position is much better in aircraft works and appreciably better in shipyards than in engineering factories, because most aircraft works are fairly new, and there has been a special drive to improve shipyard facilities. Of course, some of the firms which have no canteens have "messrooms"; but this often means no more than some sort of a room in which hot water is available, and food brought from home can be eaten, and such rooms are commonly small and inconvenient, and quite often positively sordid. Even where there are canteens there are very many complaints of bad service, mainly in cases in which the contract has been leased to an outside firm of caterers. Firms which run their own canteens, generally with the aid of committees chosen by the workers, seem usually to do the job well. Caterers definitely do not. There have been attempts, in face of the impossibility of providing either accommodation or equipment in small factories, to persuade neighbouring firms to run joint canteens; but these attempts have almost always failed. The workers in small establishments have to rely on British Restaurants or on the scanty supply of mobile canteens designed for emergency work—or, much oftener, there is no provision at all for them. This is serious, because the policy of dispersal has meant putting more of the workers into small factories; and often workers who have been used to a good canteen find themselves transferred to a place which has none—sometimes in a locality where there are no facilities at all for getting food.

* * *

There are interesting local differences in respect of canteen arrangements. In general, the practice of taking the food for the midday meal from home was, before the war, very much commoner in the North than in the South. (It was commonest of all in Scotland.) This led to a reluctance of firms in the North to set up canteens even when it had become impossible for workers to get from their ordinary rations the staple articles needed for the midday meal—especially cheese. Obviously, since rationing came in, the need for canteens has been very much greater than it was before, and the traditional feeding habits of Scotland and the North are being gradually altered. It is also more widely recognised now among factory managers and supervisors that a good canteen is a very important aid to production. The moral is not only that the necessary provision for building and equipment and personnel ought to come high up in the list of war priorities, but also that there should be a thorough inspection of the canteens now in service, and a drastic weeding out of caterers who are either charging exorbitant prices for what they serve or doing the job badly in terms of palatibility and nutritive value. Furthermore, there ought to be a big extension of British Restaurants in areas where there are large numbers of small factories; and the sending out of hot meals from central restaurants or canteens to messrooms not equipped with cooking facilities ought to be undertaken on a much larger scale.

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PACIFIC POSITION

In the Far East the deck is again cleared for action. Japan is rattling her sabre. She has been a country much inclined to the habit of sabre-rattling, but this time it would be dangerous to assume that she will not use the weapon. One thing has changed the whole scene of the Far East, just as it has changed the whole scene in Europe: the Soviet Union is at war.

As long as the Soviet Union was not at war the balance of power in the Far East was such that Japan would hardly have dared to risk a major move, whether into the North or into the South, or to concentrate her total strength for a decision in China. But now with the German Army battling at the gates of Moscow and thrusting deep into the Ukraine and the Don-Volga basin, Japan suddenly finds her hands free from the shackles which have tied them in the past from her long-cherished dreams (which the war in China has made it necessary to realise)—hence the danger inherent in the situation of the moment.

A variety of moves are possible for a militant Japan. It may be possible by considering the advantages and dangers of each to make a shrewd guess at the most likely direction of her next adventure.

A Japanese invasion of the Soviet Far East will be countered by the Soviet Far Eastern Army, by the limited or unlimited retaliatory measures of the Anglo-American bloc, by the actions of the Chinese armies in the rear. Substantial units of the Soviet Far Eastern Army may have been withdrawn for use on the Western Front, but what remains in the East cannot in any case allow the Japanese a walk-over. Besides the fact that all the Russian key-points in this area are strongly fortified, the Red bomber force and submarine fleet based on the Maritime Province will always be a worry to Japan's oversea transport, as well as her particularly inflammable cities. On top of these is the Siberian winter, which is one of the severest in the world, and which will in a few weeks make large-scale operations impossible. The minimum force which Japan would require for such a move, if it is to have any chance of success, is half a million men. And even if it should be a success, the price she might have to pay in casualties and material losses might prove to be so high that it would render her, for a period, quite incapable of standing her ground in China and farther south, whatever might be the outcome in the other theatres of war of the world.

A move by Japan into the south—into Thailand and aiming at Singapore—will be countered by the British and Dominion forces in Malaya, by the British Indian Army, by the combined force of the British, Dominion and Dutch fleets, with the limited or unlimited support of the U.S. Navy, by the counter-attacks of the Chinese armies, and possibly also by the action of the Soviet submarine fleet based on Vladivostok. This move will bring down on the Japanese head the maximum counter-strokes, hence it has also the greatest danger in store for her. To have any chance of success she will have to employ at the minimum a quarter of a million men, as well as her whole air force and navy. The combined Allied air force in this area is probably stronger than the Japanese, but here the Japanese Navy will rule supreme. It is doubtful if even the American Navy would find it wise to challenge it in the line of battle. But what the Allies fear most in the event of an open clash is the disturbance which the Japanese Navy can cause to the Allied shipping in the whole of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Fortunately, in this matter the knife cuts both ways. For, even though the Allied navy might be heavily outnumbered in this area by the Japanese, it would be in a position, even with very limited aid from the United States Navy, very gravely to menace the Japanese transport to the mainland, where her army of one and a half million may become stranded. This is probably the chief reason for Japanese caution.

If Japan should run the great risks involved in either of these moves it is clear that the objective would be no local advantage, but part of a grand Axis strategy with an eye to nothing less than the re-divisioning of the world following a total victory. Here the decision no doubt waits on Moscow's capacity to hold out and maintain an army in the Far East; Germany now looks to Japan to harass the U.S.S.R. and keep her forces divided, rather than to attack, and after four and a half years of frustrated effort in China, General Tojo may well prefer caution in action, however violent his speech.

What area remains where Japan could make an extra effort without immediately bringing down upon her head the full wrath of any power or combination of powers which are not already at war with her? The answer seems to be China, which is, unfortunately, at the moment in a particularly vulnerable position. For this there are three reasons: (1) The Russo-German war has caused one of China's life-lines, the Turkestan route to Russia, to be rendered unimportant, leaving her with only the other, the Burma Road, which is not entirely beyond the striking range of the Japanese forces. (2) Russia's engagement in the West has relieved the Japanese of the necessity of maintaining a great force in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, and thus enabled her to concentrate a far greater percentage of her total strength against China. (3) The development of the American supply to China has not yet reached a stage when it can effectively replace the joint American and Soviet help of the past.

The "China Incident," which has been developing for the Japanese from a thorn in the flesh to something like a knife at the throat, is a matter which she has to settle before she can attend to anything else. It is to her, above all others, the gravest and the most urgent problem. Here now is a golden opportunity for swinging in her whole weight for a possible settlement.

Apart from the evidence of troop movements that are now reported, it follows on a general calculation that the most likely directions of the next Japanese moves are, first, a greater war effort in China; secondly, the invasion of the Soviet Far East; and thirdly, the invasion of Thailand and Malaya. We are not therefore surprised to hear reports of a renewed attempt to close the Burma Road by diplomacy and military preparation, of a general tightening of the blockade of China particularly against American supplies, combined with an effort to lift the ban against the shipment of war materials to herself. Japan has stocked up with war materials; but in a long drawn out conflict her rulers would face exhaustion, without access to iron, steel, hardening metals and oil. The Allies can cut her off from the means of making prolonged war against anyone.

Japan, as always, will move just so far as she judges she is able to do without uniting those she threatens. To-day British policy has at last become clear in the Far East. But Britain will act—and can only act effectively—in conjunction with the U.S.A. If Japan moves towards the Burma Road, will the United States take in time the decisive step that will make General Tojo change his mind? Is Washington ready to inform the Japanese Government that a move to attack the U.S.S.R. through Mongolia and to cut off Vladivostok would mean war with the U.S.A.? The A.B.C.D. alliance, combined with the U.S.S.R., might yet prevent an extension of the war in the Far East, but the possibility of bringing Japan to reason or, if that fails, of defeating the militarists of Tokio, lies in Washington.

THIRTY OR FORTY PER CENT.

The great ones have apparently made up their minds at last to admit that all is not well with production. At least, we can attach no other meaning to Mr. Bevin's recent statement that the level of output ought to be increased this winter by thirty or forty per cent. Evidently, no such increase would be possible if things were not now badly wrong; for there can be no question of adding in anything like this proportion to the existing capital equipment or to the labour force. Nor must it be forgotten that the additional workers who can be found will be on the average less skilled and less productive than those already engaged in making munitions; or that even apart from air raids winter is a less favourable season than summer for continuous running of plant. Transport difficulties are greater in winter-time: there is more eagerness to get home early: nightshifts are harder to man. If intensive raiding begins again, there will be damage to factories and workers' dwellings; and production will be further impeded. These are plain facts, which there is no escaping.

How, then, does Mr. Bevin expect to get the large increase in output which he is now demanding? He means, we know, to draft many new women into the factories, and to secure some further releases of men from non-essential industries. He may possibly have in mind a tussle with the military authorities over the release of key-men from the armed forces—skilled engineers as well as coal-miners—and perhaps release, for a period, of workers who will thereafter be sent back to khaki. But we cannot suppose that he is trusting to these measures, even together with the pending completion of a number of new or converted factories, to yield anything like the increase in total war production which he now says is required. If he does expect this, he is living in a fool's paradise, and is guilty of elementary fallacies in simple arithmetic. By all means, let Mr. Bevin and his colleagues get as many women into munitions work as can possibly be got. Let the Board of Trade hurry up with the difficult process of concentration in the distributive trades. Let really non-essential production be stopped altogether, and let the definition of what is essential be further narrowed. Even when all this has been done, production will be nowhere near the required level unless there is also a far more effective utilisation of the men and the machines already employed on munitions, a considerable tightening up of the standards of management, and a much better planning of the flow of materials and components from stage to stage of the productive process.

This last factor is of much greater importance now that production is more "dispersed," so that assembling and finishing factories depend on a regular flow of components from a large number of other factories which they do not control. Planning the flow of materials and components was always a major problem—and one that was from the start very weakly handled—but it is more essential than ever now that war output is spread over a much larger number of independent firms. Moreover, this system of making and assembling parts in different factories throws much larger responsibilities on the departments responsible for producing or approving designs, and on the inspection department, which has to pass work intended for assembly in quite independent establishments. There is a widespread conviction among the workers on the job that neither of these sections of the war economic organisation is working at all satisfactorily at present. It is alleged both that there are frequent errors in design and specification—due partly to a shortage of competent draughtsmen and assistants—and that, in particular, the inspection department is pedantic and addicted to scrapping work for faults of finish which in no wise impair its practical efficiency. We are alive

to the fact that in certain types of work meticulous accuracy is indispensable, because valuable lives may depend on it and valuable guns, for example, be blown up if it is not achieved. But workmen commonly allege that the inspection department is apt to work to unduly rigid rules even when no such reason exists, and that it is disposed to ignore the inevitable consequences of spreading output over many firms which are new to the job, and making parts of machines which are not the best possible for the particular process, but only the best available.

These allegations may be in large measure exaggerated. But there is no doubt of their being very widely entertained: nor is there any doubt that the amount of scrapped work is high, and is often the cause of whole shops standing idle. Anything that can be done to reduce the amount of scrapping should clearly be done; and no degree of finish should be required that is not really indispensable in the interests of war efficiency and reasonable safety.

Closely akin to this question is that of securing the close co-operation of the workers in the affairs of workshop management. It is within their power to do a great deal to reduce waste and scrapped work, and to detect at an early stage errors of specification which, if they go uncorrected till later, will lead sometimes to the scrapping of weeks of work done at strain by groups of skilled craftsmen whose labours we can ill-afford to waste. To enlist the real collaboration of the workers, not merely as individuals responding to a patriotic appeal, but as teams, is abundantly worth while; and this demands a radical change in the attitude of a good many managements—a change which will not be brought about until a strong lead towards it is given by the Government itself. Of course, some managers are already doing their best to elicit this spirit. But many still are not, and are unconscious, or seem so, that a change has come over the spirit of the workshops since U.S.S.R. became our ally in the war. This change means, potentially, a much more intense effort among the workers; but it means also a spirit of greater self-assertion, not for the purpose of pushing their claims in ways that could damage the war effort, but in insistence on *their* right to participate in measures for making it more effective.

This changed spirit has to be recognised; and it has its morals, not only in the sphere of workshop collaboration, but also higher up. It reinforces the demand for full assurances that no considerations of post-war profit, and no tenderness for the separate independence of great capitalist concerns, shall be allowed to stand in the way of the fullest possible mobilisation of productive resources. In plain English, it gives point and emphasis to the demand for a complete taking over of the great establishments by the State—for a new socialisation which will leave it an open question whether the factories are ever to be returned to their previous owners, or are to be reorganised permanently on a basis of public ownership and control. It is widely believed, whether it is true or not, that firms which expect to resume profit-making enterprise after the war cannot easily ignore in their war-time activities all thoughts of the effect which their actual conduct is likely to have on their post-war earning capacity; and that, in this respect, it is difficult for managers who expect to owe their post-war salaries to their financial overlords not to be similarly swayed. The moral is not that the present managers or working employers ought to be removed and replaced by Civil Servants, or even that they ought themselves to become Civil Servants at the regular Civil Service rates of pay. If the State takes over the big factories, it will have to go on paying salaries, broadly speaking, of the size to which the existing managers are accustomed, and will have to keep the existing managers and technicians where they are, and even to enlarge their authority, when they are competent men. The people to get rid of are not the factory managers, but the boards of directors and the financial interests to which they are still subject, because they still draw their salaries from their firms and not from the State, and still expect to go on working for these same profit-seekers when the war is over.

Is there the man who can see all this, and has the courage and the capacity to operate the essentially new policy which is needed on the production front? Lord Beaverbrook has the courage; and he is the only person who has so far been found capable of impressing the public as an economic man of "push and go." But Beaverbrook is a pirate chieftain, rather than a systematiser. He is the man for the short-term drive first for 'planes (at the expense of tanks), and then for tanks (possibly at the expense of 'planes). He can whip up enthusiasm; he calls and we deliver our aluminium or our waste paper. He has *it*, beyond a doubt; but he lacks system, and his reputation, among all who have to deal with him, is that of a man who can only think of one thing at a time. He would need to amend this habit of mind to make himself the right choice for supreme production chief—for such a chief must, from the very nature of his office, be continually balancing one claim against another. More serious still, in his determination to make things hum, he is likely unnecessarily to antagonise labour. Labour is very willing for compulsion, but only on the condition that the State takes far more direct responsibility for industry and ensures fair conditions and a rightful part in management.

Mr. Bevin, who has now gone very far in accepting the principle of compulsion without being able to obtain the rightful *quid pro quo* from Capital, to a certain extent already has the job, in his capacity as Chairman of the Production Executive. But Mr. Bevin cannot really be at the same time the architect of the production effort and Minister of Labour. Nobody could; for both jobs demand for effective handling the daily mastery of a large mass of detail.

That a drastic change is needed in industrial policy, Mr. Bevin's own utterances sufficiently show. If we have not enough munitions now to attempt even a diversion in the form of an invasion of Europe, how are we to get enough, with the Russian munitions industries largely out of action or in German hands? Certainly not by mere exhortations to produce more: certainly not without an enormous improvement in organisation and a pretty ruthless handling of persons—from controllers to factory managers—who are not pulling their weight. Certainly not, then, without a big man to take the responsibility for these changes. But big men are scarce; and not the least of our "man-power" problems is the finding of the right man for this thorough overhauling of the war machine on the factory front.

LONDON SHELTERS

A YEAR ago, public opinion was deeply agitated about the inadequacy of the provision of shelters. Those were the days when thousands of men, women and children in the East End of London were crowding into the Tilbury Depository, the Columbia Market and the railway arches, and thrown pell-mell into their noisome darkness without a bunk to sleep on, without any provision for food or drink, without any sanitary convenience save of the crudest kind. Some trundled their bedding and baggage, and queued up at the entrances hours before the places opened, in order to get a little space. But most just sat or stood on the ground. It was suddenly discovered that the surface shelters would not be accepted as dormitories. There was a clamant demand for deep shelters where the people would have room to lie down.

A great contrast is provided by the shelter accommodation in London in September, 1941. A few figures speak for themselves: shelter has been provided in the London region for close on 5,000,000 persons. A third of the accommodation is in public and communal shelters, two-thirds in what are called domestic shelters, which include the street surface cubicles and the Andersons. Bunks have been installed for a million and a half persons, and are fairly evenly divided between public and Anderson shelters. These figures are exclusive of the provision in the tube stations. Last winter those stations, originally occupied by the people without a permit, were the most favoured places of refuge, and were crowded night after night with some 200,000 shelterers. To-day the tubes still have their regular customers, and they have been bunked like public shelters. But they are much less popular, and the number of those frequenting them has fallen in the last months to less than a tithe of those who filled them a year ago. All the larger public shelters have their canteens and their first-aid posts; and mobile canteens visit each evening those that have not their own arrangements. There is provision for the service of 200,000 meals a night. Some 250 doctors are engaged night after night in visiting the public shelters; 300 more are in reserve; and 300 fully qualified nurses are in constant attendance. Electric lighting and heating are installed everywhere, the shelters are disinfected every day; the sanitary arrangements in all classes have become adequate; and the health of London as regards epidemics was better during this year of stress and trial than in normal conditions.

Various agencies have combined to bring about these radical improvements. The Committee appointed by the Home Office under the chairmanship of Lord Horder by their insistence brought a rapid change. The Regional Commissioners of London made shelter provision one of their principal concerns; a special commissioner was designated to be responsible for that part of the work, originally Admiral Evans of the Broke. He was succeeded by Alderman Charles Key, the Member of Parliament for Poplar, who, in his own Borough, had seen to the installation of an efficient system. Another special commissioner, Mr. H. U. Willink, M.P., was appointed to look after the homeless by provision of rest centres and a system of rehousing and billeting. Shelter marshals were added to the army of civil defence; and in the boroughs which were most afflicted wholetime welfare workers, mostly women, were appointed for the shelters, while the staff of sanitary inspectors was increased for the special need of the night homes. Lastly, the local authorities, stimulated by the central bodies, were everywhere active in securing decent conditions for their population, and began to vie with each other in providing amenities, while the Treasury loosened the purse strings. Not less important was the activity of the shelterers themselves who were banded in committees either for the borough or for particular shelters, and, on the one hand pressed their reasonable demands, and on the other formed a democratic organisation, and so turned a huddled rabble into something like an organised community.

The result of the changes and of experience of raids has been a striking alteration in the favour of the people for different classes of shelters. It came to be recognised that the deep underground shelter was not safer and was less healthy than the basement or the domestic shelter; and while, during the last months, in the prolonged lull in the raiding of London, the total shelter population has greatly diminished, the reduction has been bigger in the deep shelters and in the public places as a whole. In September 9.5 per cent. of the population of the London area was staying the night in the shelters, and of those about 1.5 per cent. were in public and 8 per cent. in the domestic. The East End boroughs naturally maintained the largest proportion of the shelter population.

But there were striking differences in the ratio of public and domestic shelters in neighbouring boroughs. The number of homeless who had to be accommodated in the rest centres has fallen sensationally in the last two months almost to the vanishing point. The last census showed in London only one person in the 780 rest centres. To-day a large army of civil defence workers stand by every night to see to the well-being of the small fraction of the population who do not sleep in their homes. But, no doubt, the conditions will change.

When the physical necessities of the shelterers had been satisfied, there was a growing appreciation of the need for introducing the elements of social life and intelligent occupation. The peril of an intellectual and recreational black-out was recognised, and some of the progressive boroughs in London, at an early stage, formed shelter councils to see to the provision of decent amenities. The first attempt was for organised entertainment, and the two bodies, C.E.M.A. and E.N.S.A., came to the rescue. Concert parties, actors and singers, performing in these new kinds of night clubs, attracted publicity, perhaps too much publicity. It was feared that the advertised occasional presence of stars in the big public shelters would attract the crowd, and so impair the policy of wide distribution. Moreover, it was soon apparent that self-entertainment is better than professional entertainment; and it was one of the functions of shelter councils to develop local talent. At the same time, educational occupation was fostered.

The London County Council saw the opportunity of taking many of the activities of its evening institutes into the shelters during the long black-out hours of the winter, when the people could not go to the institutes. Classes of all kinds were encouraged. Practical things, like dressmaking and handicrafts, were the most popular. But travel talks, discussions of current affairs, music and reading of plays were favoured. The Institute of Adult Education and the proprietors of the Penguin books helped by the provision of libraries, and a number of local authorities developed a new use for their public libraries in connection with their shelters. So the beginning of intellectual activity was fostered to supplement the spontaneous beginning of social life. Some shelters tended to become clubs. For tens of thousands the night life out of their homes must have offered something good that they had not known before.

It is to be hoped that during the coming winter this development of social service and adult education will be not only maintained in the shelters of London, but carried a big step further. What the experience of the year has shown is that, in face of urgent need, the people of London and the central and local authorities can rise to a higher conception of public responsibility.

NORMAN BENTWICH

A LONDON DIARY

DID our political warfare department make use of that wonderfully stirring and courageous sermon of the Bishop of Munster that you printed last week? Yes, dear reader, it did, as you could have learnt had you listened in to British propaganda to Germany. That you were not told about it on the British wireless the first moment that a document was available is due to the strange habit we have in this country of not letting our right hand know what our left hand doeth. The public knows that after two years of war a Ministerial Trinity was set up to bring some unity of command into political warfare, and it may assume that at last propaganda has ceased to be just a fifth wheel on the coach and become a part of the war machine, at least potentially related to actual staff plans and strategy. But unless you have the time and the linguistic capacity to "monitor" British Talks, you will have no notion what sort of propaganda we do. And yet it is vital to know because the nature of our propaganda is the clue to the sort of war we are fighting.

* * *

British political warfare has without doubt been somewhat improved and it is far ahead of much of the stuff talked at home. By its very nature propaganda to Germany must assume the existence of other submerged Germanies which sometimes, as in the case of the Bishop of Munster's sermon, raise their heads in spite of Hitler's triumphs and conquests. The danger is that once again we commit the crime of appealing to our friends on the Continent and at the same time build up a Vansittart view of Germany which evades all the real problems and bemuses the minds of the British public with vague puerilities about the German character. If you want a good answer to the natural question about why the German people accept Hitler, I recommend you to read the articles by H. N. Brailsford and Douglas Smith in the October issue of *Left News*. They are written in answer to the mystifications of James Walker, who, as this year's President of the British Labour Party should not have fallen into the trap laid for him by Conservative propagandists. Both Brailsford and Douglas Smith know Germany; neither of them are apologising for Hitler nor denying the true measure of popular responsibility. But both understand how it comes about that the German people accept Hitler; nor if you use your imaginations and recall what the ordinary German went through in political and economic upheaval between 1918 and 1933, is it very difficult to see why he first accepted a Führer. There are two reasons why it is important to understand this; first, because the very chance of a world not perpetually at war depends on a settlement of realities, based on the necessities of international economic and political institutions, and, secondly, because unless we do understand we may find ourselves falling into the habits of accepting anti-Semitism, asking for a leader to clear away our troubles, thinking that our own imperialism in India and elsewhere does not matter. . . .

* * *

An American who saw France in 1940 and feared the growth of "Maginot-mindedness" amongst some of the members of the Government, and an ever-increasing split between Left and Right as to the conduct of the war, remarked to me that the great saving difference between the two countries was that in Britain the press maintains the substance of freedom. He had plenty of criticisms of the press to offer, but he agreed with me that it did an immense public service in canalising the grievances that would otherwise go sour, and in criticising, though less frankly than he thought desirable, certain aspects of the Government's policy at home and abroad. Last year he heard rumours of compulsory censorship. Then he feared our number was up. You cannot run this war, he said, except on the basis of really popular support, and nothing undermines that so much as a press in which people have ceased to have confidence. The worst of all symptoms he observed in France were the blank columns in some newspapers and the suppression of others. Americans could swallow the suppression of the *Worker* and the *Week*, though they did not understand why they were not now permitted, when the party is the keenest group in the country on winning the war. But if the tendency to compulsion had gone farther, the American public would have taken the gloomiest views of Britain's chances. "Even now," he said, "I am bothered by the touchiness of some of your Ministers, who seem unable to realise that press criticisms and popular discussions of issues, on which Ministers claim to be the only people in the know, are the essential safeguards of a democracy. Fortunately, your Prime Minister has a reputation for believing in the freedom of the press. He certainly has made some grand statements about its importance in the past."

I wonder what my American friend would have said if he had read the House of Lords decision on the powers of the Home Secretary under 18 B. According to the majority decision the Courts have no authority to consider whether the Home Secretary has in fact "reasonable cause" for believing a citizen to be dangerous; he can just shut him up and say that he has done so in good faith. Lord Atkin, in a dissenting judgment worthy of Lord Mansfield, argued that the Home Secretary should be obliged to convince the Court that he had really had reasonable grounds. "The question is whether the words 'a man has' can mean 'if a man thinks he has.'" Lord Atkin was of the opinion that they cannot, and that to deal with words in this way was to follow not the precedents of legal authority, but those of Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking Glass*. The accepted function of the judiciary is to elucidate the natural meaning of words in an Act, not to give such words the meaning they consider desirable or opportune. Yet it was such reasons of convenience which the *Times* advanced in an article accepting the majority decision. The *Times* did not, however, disguise its disquiet at the complete breach this decision makes in our libertarian tradition, and urged that the interned person should have the right of counsel before the Advisory Committees, and that it is the duty of Parliament and the press to exercise most careful vigilance and ask the most searching questions about the application of 18 B. Sir Irving Albery contributed on Wednesday a letter to the *Times*, pointing out that the Advisory Committee was set up by the Home Secretary and has at its head a distinguished lawyer. Though Mr. Morrison has said that in arriving at decisions he has not been influenced by any additional information not available to the Advisory Committee, he has, as a result of personal examination, disregarded the advice of his Committee in over a hundred cases. I would not care to be in his shoes. The House of Lords has now decreed that his personal judgment, unchecked by any court, is sufficient to decide whether or no a man shall spend years of his life in prison—a power, which Lord Atkin says, has never before been given to the Executive in this country.

* * *

I referred last week to Communists who had howled down Ellen Wilkinson in Trafalgar Square. That there were Communists among those who shouted is not, I think, in dispute; indeed, well-disciplined party members made it their business to try to impose silence on unruly followers who have never been able to swallow the official line of supporting the Churchill Government "without reservation." But my phrase should have been amended; the Communist Party, to my knowledge, tried to make the Trafalgar Square Rally a success by canvassing it and pushing its publicity, and I have precise evidence that those who shouted at Ellen Wilkinson included members of the Services and people who had no party affiliations, whose feelings were outraged by the complacency of some Labour speakers. I have seldom seen anything more absurd than the London Labour Party's "apology" to the Soviet Ambassador for what is described as an organised Communist interruption. They should do a bit of apologising themselves for their failure during the last eighteen months to turn the National Government, which could have done anything it liked, into a Government in which people who are vociferously anti-Fascist can feel confidence.

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One of the most remarkable and encouraging publications in this country has just completed its first year of existence. *La France Libre* was the creation of André Labarthe and a few friends. Labarthe was a professor of science at

the Sorbonne; he is a democrat who has never lost his faith. In the short space of a year he has performed the surprising feat of building a circulation of 20,000 for a monthly half-crown review. He writes for the many Frenchmen now in exile who still care for the great tradition of French culture, and he has round him a distinguished group of French writers. Jacques Maritain, Georges Bernanos and Jules Romains are amongst those who have written for *La France Libre*. Well-known British writers contribute to *La France Libre*, and it has many English readers. Those who listen to the B.B.C. broadcast in French know that Labarthe is a magnificent orator, and his articles, no less than his speeches, burn, like those of Michelet and Gambetta, with the traditional French flame of patriotism and love of liberty.

* * *

"He has sounded the whole gamut from plain naughtiness and tiresomeness to the highest nobility and courage." Thus Rebecca West in her congratulatory message to H. G. Wells on the occasion of his 75th birthday. At the Dorchester Hotel luncheon organised by the *International Review*, and attended by ambassadors, civil servants, and the general ragtag and bobtail of the literary, scientific and journalistic worlds, the "plain naughtiness" aspect of H. G. was in the ascendant. To begin with, he complained, it was not his birthday; that had been over and done with weeks ago. Then he had not expected this large and imposing gathering—I seem to have heard this from H. G. before—but a meeting of a few friends, *his* friends, not the invited guests of the *International Review*, somewhere in Soho, at which he could have learned something of what was going on in Central Europe. Again, was it not something of an impertinence, given "the tragic things happening in the world at the present time," to hold "this preposterous and unnecessary gathering to smother an old gentleman with wreaths even before he is dead." And so on. . . . When he had done scolding the organisers, H. G. proceeded to scold the world. Why had nobody attended to the Sankey Declaration of the Rights of Man? It was a great document; it came into the world with high hopes; it had its little day of sensation . . . and then it petered out, whereas the Churchill-Roosevelt Declaration, "a woolly document full of holes," had excited a continuing fuss. What was wrong with the Sankey Declaration? Why would nobody tell him what was wrong? And if nothing was wrong, why was not something done about it? The answer is, of course, that the Sankey Declaration of the Rights of Man is addressed to a world opinion which is either non-existent or submerged; whereas the Churchill-Roosevelt Declaration, full of holes as it is, emanates from the leaders of two Great Powers. It is widely discussed because these States may well have the power to implement its provisions, whereas the opinion of the world is at the moment powerless, which is only to say that the world is organised on a national and not on an international basis. Wells knows all this as well as I do, and the fact that he knows it, and that we all know that he knows it, invested his complaints with a peevishness to which of late he has been increasingly prone. And this is a pity, because there are few people alive to whom we owe so much as to H. G. If I start to explain just how much, I suppose he would only accuse me of laying a premature wreath. And yet if I were a great man I'd rather know what people had to say about me while I was alive!

* * *

One thing that should have gratified H. G. was the attention paid to his 75th birthday in Moscow. I have in front of me a fascinating account by Kornei Chukovsky of the work that has gone on even during the German-Soviet war in the Moscow Central Library of Foreign Literature. A truly international ferment, I gather, is at work there: students of many countries studying the books and literature of France, Britain, America, Norway and Germany; classes and lectures in subjects that sound strangely remote; a long queue, for instance, for a lecture by Professor Morosov on "Dryden and Pope" and stage performances in the Library's theatre of scenes from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Malade Imaginaire*, followed by recitations from Horace in Latin, Petrarch in Italian and Byron in English. From this Library sprang the Moscow Institute of Foreign Languages and branch libraries in many factories. After describing this centre of a new international culture, Chukovsky goes on to say that he went to look at an exhibition of Wellsiana, arranged in the Library. There were first editions of the *Time Machine*, the *Wonderful Visit* and *The Food of the Gods*, and other books. On the same stand "hangs a fine-looking" pair of tongs for handling incendiary bombs. Beneath the portrait of Mr. Wells you don't see a garland, palms or a bouquet of flowers, but a capacious box of fine sand, likewise designed for fire-fighting purposes. The Library continues to function as vigorously as ever. Here is a young man with a pile of books before him, making notes and excerpts. "I introduce myself. He is a student of literature, by name Balaskov. He is writing his thesis on 'The Aesthetics of Baudelaire.' 'I have been mobilised,' he says, 'but haven't yet been called to the colours. So I am taking advantage of the opportunity to finish my thesis.' Nearby is a young woman with fluffy hair, by name Irina Bukhteyeva, a student of musical history. She has been engaged for some years in writing a dissertation on the songs of Schumann set to Heine's verses, but just now it is not poems and music she has lying before her, but some kind of cardboard model. 'What's that?' 'Typhoon Dry Fire Extinguisher. I'm studying the way it's made. It's my turn at fire watch duty to-night.' Here's another reader—Gulyevich—a former worker. He learned to speak and read English in a branch of the Library at one of the factories. He then graduated at the Institute of Foreign Languages and is now teaching English in a number of higher educational establishments. He is wearing the uniform of lieutenant. He has just run in for half-an-hour to read the American newspapers."

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The demand for 100,000 tons of paper salvage has run ahead of the machinery for collection, but I gather that the new organisation is under weigh and that boy scouts and girl guides are all being brought back to help under expert guidance. Munitions, it seems, eat up waste paper; there are cartridge cases and ammunition boxes and radio sets for tanks and dust-covers for aero-engines, and all sorts of other infernal uses to which man can now put the material which enabled Shakespeare and Milton to express their thoughts. Apparently there is much waste paper that has accumulated in factories and business premises and shops that can be taken off with no loss to anyone. There is not a great deal of waste in the use of paper for distribution nowadays. The silly snobbery which banned the respectable from carrying a pair of shoes unwrapped or a string bag to Kensington has died in the war. But there are limits to the process; carrots can be carried naked in a net; rice cannot. A lot can still be saved by taking packages back to be refilled or exchanged, and shops should organise a rotating stock of cartons, returning the empties to the manufacturers. But the main resource is still the old hoard of forgotten paper in the warehouse or shop basement.

* * *

The Nazis are reported to be exhibiting the Bayeux Tapestries as propaganda. That spirited embroidery, the ancestor of all strip-cartoons, certainly depicts William the Conqueror's successful invasion of England, nine hundred years ago. What the Nazis forget—and certainly the enthusiastic museum curator of Bayeux would not remind them—is that Napoleon did just the same. He displayed the Tapestries at Paris, to encourage the French, when his barges lay at Boulogne!

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Centurian.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

A piece of cake, half-eaten by King George of the Hellenes, was auctioned by Lady Crosfield on the occasion of the presentation by the Greek King of a mobile canteen for the Y.M.C.A. to Princess Helena Victoria, president of the National Women's Auxiliary of the Y.M.C.A., in the grounds of St. James's Palace.—Caption to a photograph in the *Tatler*.

There is no such thing as a Scorpion woman without a generous ration of "Oomph."

Creative energy and will-power is the hall mark of Scorpio. Marie Antoinette had sex and will-power. Her sex power was all right, but she mistook will-power for sheer obstinacy and lost her head.

Marie Curie was also a Scorpion. Her creative energy led her to discover Radium.—*Sunday Pictorial*.

For this reason alone, every effort should be made to keep sport going in this country on as big a scale as possible, for, if there is to be no sport, there will be no results to send out to our poor fellows in Germany, many of whom probably do not yet know that Owen Tudor won the New Derby at Newmarket.—Correspondent in *Sunday Times*.

I was watching a squad of soldiers drilling on the barrack square and was surprised to see one of them marching with two rifles (at the short trail). Upon asking the reason for this, I was informed by a sergeant that the owner of the second rifle was ill, but his rifle had to go on parade just the same as usual.—Letter in *News Chronicle*.

LULLABY

Now a lull broods in the west,
It is not the time to act;
Mention of widespread unrest
Shows a want of public tact.
Where our island ramparts rise
Long-term Blitzkriegs we prepare;
We are safe against surprise.
Goodnight children, everywhere.

Bottle-necks will now be eased,
There is danger in delay,
Every ounce of effort squeezed,
Only Whitehall in the way.
Ministers have things in hand,
There's not one whom we can spare;
Everything is being planned.
Good-night children, everywhere.

Though our labour must restore
All at Dunkirk left behind,
All our arms for total war,
Let this fact be borne in mind;
We left nothing that could be,
Thanks to foresight all too rare,
Helpful to the enemy.
Good-night children, everywhere.

With invasion looming near
Confidence must be renewed;
There is cause for reasoned fear,
None for deep disquietude.
Risks in war should not be run.
Heed no unofficial scare;
Everything is being done.
Good-night children, everywhere.

SAGITTARIUS

THE EDUCATION OF THE DOCTOR

SEVERAL years ago, at a Diocesan Conference held at Wells, Dr. Warre of Eton lamented the fact that so few educated gentlemen were taking Orders in the Church. Upon which, the Rev. C. L. Marson interjected: "What the Church wants is not more educated gentlemen, but more inspired bounders like St. Peter and St. James." I have no claim to say what sort of education a clergyman should have, but I am quite sure that an inspired bounder is not likely to become an ideal physician.

The British medical curriculum is probably the longest and most elaborate professional training in the world. It demands from students, as a minimum condition for licence to practise, more time and a greater measure of concentration and application than are demanded from students of law, of theology, or of any of the applied sciences. In many ways it is an admirable training; but its main structure was determined long ago, when the science and art of medicine were very different in their scope and in their methods from present-day practice and theory. At the same time, one may wonder if the pre-technical training of doctors—the cultural or humanistic education—has ever been really adequate to the peculiar nature of the work which doctors have undertaken to do.

L. A. G. Strong puts into the mouth of one of his characters some cogent reflections on the psychology and education of doctors: "A physician needed so much more than knowledge of disease. His authority must extend and derive from beyond the surgery. That was where so many failed. They were negligible as men. . . . What was there about special training that robbed all but the strongest minds of their balance? . . . He supposed that those who took it were forced to specialise so young that they never got any real education at all."

Doctoring is not just a trade or a handicraft. Craftsmanship certainly enters into the doctor's work, but more than craftsmanship is rightly expected of him. Doctors often claim that they belong to a learned profession, but few of them show evidence of it. It was several hundred years ago that Gideon Harvey, physician to Charles II, said that "Of two or three hundred Physitians, you shall scarce find six, that can justly pretend to the title of a good Physitian, or whose Education doth hardly qualify them to be rendered such."

What sort of cultural background, then, is desirable in the training of a doctor? Twenty years ago, George Sampson said that "the person who cannot make a concise, lucid and intelligible statement in speech or in writing is an uneducated person." That is the minimum. The pre-technical education of a doctor should in addition have inspired him with a sensibility to good literature and noble thought, with a tolerant and understanding philosophy, self-respect, and a realisation of the sacredness of individual life. In the *B.M.J.*, a few weeks ago, Professor Ryle posed the problem, "How shall the medical education of the future help to develop a breed of doctors better blessed with humanity and judgment, with simultaneous gain rather than loss to their scientific sense?"

Getting a little nearer to his special life-work, the education of the doctor-to-be should include what we may call "functional biology," or "humanistic natural history," throwing light on the nature of life and the forces that determine its manifestations. This, rather than detailed physics and chemistry, should constitute his introduction to real science.

So much for pre-clinical education. How well does the technical training of the medical student fit him for his life-work? The great majority of students become general practitioners or family doctors—panel and private; and it is their education which is here being considered. In a recent article, *The Lancet* put the question: "The aim of the medical curriculum being to turn out good general practitioners, how do we set about it?" and this is how the editor answers it: "From the moment of registration, the student is taught by specialists, most of whom have no experience of general practice. At the end of the course, and of a few resident appointments, he is well—even brilliantly—equipped to start specialising. He has a sound general background of all that is rare in medicine and surgery, but he has learned to think of common diseases as humdrum. He can discuss points of technique in all the specialties; but he has had no chance to treat the minor ailments, because these do not reach the hospital clinic. . . . He may or may not be a competent anaesthetist; he thinks the business of making the patient comfortable is work for the nurse; his ideas about the industrial and social responsibilities of medicine are vague and general; and he does not even realise that to sign a patient off as 'fit for work' is an act of faith unless he is clear what strains that work implies. He begins his life's work as a fumbler, lacking half the tools of his trade; and he learns skill at the expense of his patients. Every general practitioner remembers his first week in the surgery; to the patient he was a young chap not quite up to it; to himself he was a young chap far beyond it: and both were true—he could have dealt competently with an obscure or alarming condition, he was only at a loss with chronic and minor illness. But these are to be his life's work; if he is ill-informed about them at the outset he is at a disadvantage; and if he is conditioned to find them boring he is handicapped indeed." No wonder Thomas Fuller said: "Physicians, like beer, are best when they are old."

That every practitioner should have an accurate general knowledge of anatomy, especially functional anatomy, is obvious. But that anyone except a surgical specialist should be compelled to waste two or three half-years clogging his memory with the names of every minute branch of every artery and nerve in the body is just stupid. The Materia Medica course represents another waste of energy and time urgently needed for the study of realities. It is far more important that the practising doctor should be able "to make a patient comfortable" in body and in mind than that he should be able to identify by sight all the leaves and roots used in pharmacy.

Then, again, during the years of studentship much more intimate contact should be established with ordinary patients both in hospital and in their own homes. The publicly provided hospitals as well as the great voluntary hospitals to which the medical schools are attached should be more generally used for the education and humanisation of students; and at a late stage in the student's career he should be compelled to spend at least three months assisting in the routine work of a large general practice—if possible run by a firm of doctors officially recognised as responsible and competent.

There is one branch of medicine the importance of which is increasingly realised by intelligent laymen as well as by intelligent doctors, in which the thousands of medical students studying in our hospitals and schools still receive practically no education whatever. We hear a great deal nowadays about the importance of preventive medicine—that is, of private and public hygiene; and it is rightly pointed out that the proper person to impart to the laity our knowledge of this subject is the family doctor or general practitioner. He should be an expert on such matters as diet, clothing, exercise, gymnastics, posture and domestic hygiene. But, unfortunately, he has never been taught to regard this as any part of his work.

Rational preventive work in medicine, as in statesmanship, or engineering, or any other department of activity, depends on an understanding of the relative causative factors. In the orthodox semi-official textbooks, that branch of medicine which deals with the causes of ill-health—the branch known as aetiology—is usually passed over lightly and casually. A few of the ultimate precedent circumstances are commonly enumerated, but little is said about the initial conditions and habits which set going the sequence of changes that in the end overthrow the normal physiological balance, and so bring about "disease." I doubt if the experts in any other art or craft are so little concerned with the initial evidences of failing efficiency—that is, of failing "health"—as are the bulk of our practising physicians.

Of the real beginnings of the majority of our chronic ailments we still know little, largely through our habit of calling in the doctor only when more or less irremediable damage has been done. What should we think of the London County Council if it waited until Waterloo Bridge had fallen into the Thames before consulting its architects and engineers?

If the public insists on preventive medicine, in the long run it will be provided. Our knowledge of physiology has been revolutionised in the last twenty or thirty years. Much of the new knowledge has a direct bearing on the maintenance of health in the conditions of contemporary life. Very little of it has yet been so applied.

HARRY ROBERTS

A MOST REPULSIVE BOOK

I HEARD a man the other day in the course of an argument referring to the Old Testament as "a most repulsive book." "But," said the man who was arguing with him, "I thought you were a Christian." "I am," said the other, "but that doesn't mean I can't see the Old Testament is one of the most repulsive books ever written." I could not help wondering as I listened why I had never been repelled in this fashion by the Old Testament. It is true that the ancient Hebrews had a deplorable habit of smiting people under the fifth rib so that they died, and that they were a little unmerciful in their treatment of Ammonites, Jebusites and others of the lesser breeds without the law. It is true also that one of their heroes was an unlovable man called Jacob, who in a civilised community would have been sent to gaol for obtaining a blessing by false pretences, and that their patriarchs were more polygamous than can be approved by minds still Victorian. On the whole, however, the Old Testament strikes me as being an extraordinarily faithful record of human nature from the time when Adam explained that the woman tempted him and Cain asked: "Am I my brother's keeper?" The behaviour of the liberated Israelites in fashioning and worshipping the golden calf while Moses was absent in quest of the law of the perfect life on the mountain—how shocking it was, but what a perfect fable of human life in the succeeding centuries!

The Old Testament ought to be popular in modern times, for it certainly does not portray eminent men as plaster saints. There is not much scope left for a debunking biographer by the time an Old Testament historian has finished with one of his heroes. Moses was an assassin, Saul a semi-madman with murderous designs on the life of a noble youth, David a man who, having fallen in love with a beautiful woman, cold-bloodedly sent her husband to his death. There is scarcely an idealised character in the Old Testament, indeed. Noah got drunk, Abraham was a liar, Eli was vain, and Elisha took a terrible revenge on children who were innocently amused by his baldness. Possibly, however, the man who found the Old Testament repulsive does not like such modernish exposures of the frailties of human nature. Or

he may be repelled by records of conduct that seems to him repellent. In that case, I fancy, he will have to condemn as repulsive, not only the Old Testament, but all the literatures and all the histories of all nations.

Take the Greeks, for example. How repellent in some of its aspects is the story of the *Iliad*! Achilles, who is often idealised as a man who preferred glory to length of days, sulked in his tent during a great war and, if he had been living to-day, would have been liable to be shot for disobedience and desertion in the face of the enemy. When he did fight at last, he fought under a grossly unfair advantage and his treatment of the body of Hector was savage enough to shock even the twentieth century. Nor does Aeschylus show us a prettier side of Greek life. He portrays the wife of Agamemnon as an adulterous and fiendish murderess, and his son as at best a well-meaning matricide. In the plays of Sophocles, Oedipus kills his father—rather inadvertently, it must be admitted—and, equally inadvertently, marries his mother—a repellent story that deluded Freud into thinking that most men more or less wanted to kill their fathers and marry their mothers. Euripides is no more saccharine in his picture of life in the *Bacchae* in which, if I remember right, a number of demented female relations have a man torn to pieces simply because he is a rationalist.

Even English literature is fairly repulsive if you judge it by the characters of the human beings depicted in it. Shakespeare's plays present us with a gallery of men whom, if they did not talk such beautiful blank verse, we should regard as monsters. Richard III, of course, in spite of his admirable rhetoric, we recognise as a monster; but most of us are duped into a kind of compassion for Macbeth because he committed his murders to the accompaniment of such incomparable words. We even half-sympathise with Lady Macbeth—of all famous murderesses, perhaps, the basest. If she figured, not in a poetic play, but in a volume in the "Notable British Trials Series," we should realise this. As for Othello, many people think him a noble fellow because he made such noble speeches, but wife-smothering does not seem to me a venial offence, and King David with all his faults, never went so far as that. Shylock, again, was a thoroughly objectionable person in a disguise of poetry; and, if King Lear had been a deliberate criminal, his conduct could not have brought more misery to others than it did. Compare the characters in Elizabethan plays with the characters in the Old Testament, indeed, and, if you are easily repelled, you will be hard put to it to say which you find the more repellent.

Then take history—the history of any nation you please—and, if you are in the mood to be shocked, you will find plenty to shock you. No man need go outside the records of his own country in search of villains or of men who at one time or another have behaved in a way that would bar them, if they lived in these days, from the membership of a London club. There is no English monarch from the time of William the Conqueror to that of William the Fourth who could be described as up to the standard of a third-rate Moses, and I for one prefer the way in which Solomon treated his multitude of wives to the way in which Henry VIII treated his. The very heroes of modern nations have a Newgate Calendar taint. Think of Drake and John Brown. As for the masses of the people, however ardently one believes in democracy, one cannot but admit that again and again they have behaved as contemptibly as their predecessors of the days before the Flood and of the Golden Calf.

This, however, is not the way in which to read history or literature. History at its best is a record of noble persons, and literature at its best is a mirror of noble persons—characters in the dramatic struggle between light and darkness, between good and evil, in whom we worship an element above the reach of common life. There is in them a spark of nobility that cannot be extinguished by contempt or condemnation. Because of this, Puritans quite justly become hero-worshippers as they read of Nelson or Byron or Shelley. We cannot demand perfection in our fellow-creatures, but how much nearer perfection are the great men of the past—and of the present—than ourselves! Hence, I think, our instinctive feeling that Othello was a noble creature who committed a crime while the balance of his mind was disturbed is not merely the result of literary illusion. If we were sitting on a jury trying a modern Othello, we should probably vote for a verdict of guilty, but we might recommend him to mercy. All biographers of great men, it seems to me, should recommend their subjects to mercy—Plutarch was Shakespearean in that sense. There may be a few famous men whom it is difficult to forgive—men like Jacob and Alcibiades—but Jacob probably had his good points when once he had settled down and the fact that Alcibiades was a traitor seems a trifle when we remember how Socrates loved him.

Hence, it seems to me to be mere freakishness to regard the history of any nation which produced great men as repulsive. And of all books one of the least repulsive to the ordinary reader is surely the Old Testament. The Psalms, for instance—one might as well call the music of Bach or Handel repulsive. Here we have poetry—some of it said to have been written by the murderer of Uriah the Hittite—raising standards of justice and mercy that the world has not yet overtaken. It is said that the ancient Jews did not believe in the immortality of the soul—a thing I find it hard to believe in view of the close of the Twenty-third Psalm—but, if they did not, how much the more noble was their passion for the poor, the prisoners, and the oppressed and their condemnation of those who put their money out to usury and took reward against the innocent! How noble, too, was their praise of life—life amid its sufferings, life amid its miseries. "The heavens declare the glory of God." "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy." Yet the men who wrote these things, we are told, expected no reward in Heaven; and certainly no such poetry was ever inspired by selfish hope of reward on earth.

I write, I may say, as one who seldom reads either the Old Testament or the classics; and my opinion of the Old Testament may be coloured by childish memories of David hurling the pebbles at Goliath, Samson losing his magical hair for the love of Delilah, Daniel in the lions' den, and Shadrach, Meschech and Abednego in the fiery furnace. Even if they are, however, these ancient fables seem to me to be better than Aesop's and equally true. There is a solid wisdom in them that would remain even if the whole world turned atheist. For the rest, I think that Moses and Noah and Abraham and Isaac compare favourably with modern Cabinet Ministers, and even Absalom seems a gentleman in comparison with some of the famous figures of contemporary Europe. For Lot's wife I have a weakness, as I might have behaved in much the same way myself, and I think that, if Shakespeare had taken them for his theme, he might have made us feel as sorry for Ahab and Jezebel as he makes us feel for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. After all, Jezebel was a loyal wife, even though, according to rigid standards, she was not a good woman. I forget exactly what Jereboam did, but I have no doubt there is something to be said for him, too. I cannot help thinking, indeed, that there are many more repulsive books about more repulsive people than the Old Testament. I must read it one of these days.

Y. Y.

THE MOVIES

"My Life with Caroline," at the Marble Arch and London Pavilion.

"Our Allies," at the Regal.

My Life with Caroline is near-Lubitch; airy, beautifully mannered, expensive, papery to the touch. The essentials are not so much Lewis Milestone (who directs) or Ronald Colman (who steers his wife through another love affair) as the background of pre-war riches. You never saw such furnishings! Mr. Colman is a publisher, and though there's no hint of what he publishes, it must be staggeringly successful. He has a house with vast rooms and a heavenly spiral staircase floating up from the hall. He has a cocktail bar with as many stops as a Wurlitzer. He has a wife whom he leaves for months at a time to enjoy the staircase and the cocktail bar, and no one apparently ever comes to the house except her lover, from next door. He, though a sculptor, also inhabits a Palace of Arts, with a cocktail bar almost as grand as Mr. Colman's. Poor Anna Lee (charmingly silly) has the alternative of millions and Ronald Colman, or millions and the sculptor next door. Ronald *looks* much better in the home perspective, but then—during the publishing season?—he isn't there. And as someone says of her, "when people aren't there she sort of forgets them." Ronald lets her almost elope and then snatches her back, as he has done before. It's amusing, in a glossy, glassy way, this comedy of a very few people with a lot of *lebensraum*; but one can't help wondering what would come of them in a slump, with the staircase peeling away and cocktail-shaker silent.

Our Allies—a film of Soviet preparedness—has been admirably edited for English audiences by Herbert Marshall. Mr. Priestley introduces, and there is a good commentary. The first half of the film, which runs for fifty minutes, is a perhaps overlong record of athletic prowess seen chiefly in May Day processions, but the second half, depicting army manoeuvres, gives an extraordinarily vivid and complete record of the sort of warfare that is taking place in Russia to-day. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

THE WALTON VIOLIN CONCERTO

The lay-out of William Walton's latest important work resembles that of the Viola Concerto very closely indeed. The new work gains over the old in a higher degree of organisation, the material being mostly derived from a seminal theme of entrancing beauty—the wandering *sognando* melody with which the soloist, without any ado, ushers in the work—and in a Finale, a Burlesca in free rhythms, which exploits the dramatic effectiveness of the concerto style to rather more purpose. Any criticism, whether of the work or of the performance, must be heavily qualified by the fact that it was heard in the vile conditions of the Albert Hall—conditions peculiarly unkind to any music not of the tiddly-om-pom-*pom* order; but on a first impression one might suggest that the construction of the last two movements is dangerously loose and that the Scherzo, which makes concessions to what a popular violinist considers due to his fans, does not amount to enough, and leaves the concerto with a hole in the middle. The whole work is admittedly much more of a *Virtuosenstück* than its elder brother, and all Mr. Henry Holst's admirable taste and technique did not suffice to conceal the fact that he was fighting a losing battle with the acoustics of the place; the glow of the B major thirds in the *cadenza quasi accompagnata* (a paragraph of great beauty and ingenuity) was adumbrated rather than fully communicated. In the first movement, however, the soloist asserted his position with success, and it was here that the composer, distilling to an even finer essence the complex, somewhat enigmatic emotions which created the andante of the Viola Concerto and the adagio of the Symphony, gave us the most rapt ten minutes of his career. The orchestration is extremely precise, but much fuller and more elaborate than that of the Viola Concerto, and here again the conditions of performance blurred the whole effect to such an extent that few listeners can have detached the important design interwoven by the bassoon with the first statement of the main theme, and floodlit, at the recapitulation, by the solo violin. This unexpected juxtaposition constitutes one of the greatest beauties of the work, but it is only one of many that went for little on Saturday. This is music which will clearly yield more and more from repetition. The composer's signature is evident in that juggling with the relation-

ships of two neighbouring keys (here B minor and C major) of which he has always been fond; but the counterpoint, though superficially complicated in places, is too logical to be really hard to follow. One hesitates to call this concerto a step forward for Mr. Walton; it is more in the nature of a picture of the same subject (as that of the Viola Concerto) done in a different light; whereby certain features have gained enormously in effective pathos, at the expense of others. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The London Group

Pictures by members of the London Group squeeze each other worse than ever in the narrows of the Leger Gallery. Overflowing the main room, they jostle their way up the stairs into the Second Floor Back and the Second Floor Front and even into the adjacent closet. In a way, this is matter for rejoicing, since it proves that the more serious British artists are, in spite of all, carrying on; on the other hand, it makes it difficult for a critic to appreciate their work. For instance, there are four little pictures by that most promising artist, Lawrence Gowing; placed as they are, they have an unimportant, half-hearted air, and probably they are not important, but one cannot see them well enough to be sure. John Tunnard, about the best of our "abstract" painters, makes a better showing: his lively colour and significant design emerge from the prevailing gloom and produce their effect. That under-rated artist, du Plessis, is as usual admirable. Neither Matthew Smith nor Ivon Hitchens is seen at his best, but Morland Lewis with a sound painting, *In the Train*, does himself justice. The ladies, as was to be expected in time of war, make a large contribution. Indeed, it is surprising to see how many competent paintresses there are in England. The best are not represented, yet here are works by Marie Godwin, Mary Potter, Ethel Walker, Eve Disher, Gwen Herbert, Elizabeth Polunin and Vera Cuningham, all of which deserve serious attention.

Correspondence

PRODUCTION

SIR,—My work as a managing director of a firm engaged exclusively on war contracts is a tangle of frustrations, confusions and wasteful efforts. My firm is working at high pressure, yet our output of war supplies falls far short of our potential capacity and of a 100 per cent. return on the energy expended. This fact is in no measure the result of any peculiar defect in managerial competence or in the diligence of the firm's technicians. It is attributable solely to the Government's devotion to the policy of using a peacetime structure as the basis of war production. I have to waste energy and to cool war enthusiasm in the competitive scramble for the best contracts. Success in this effort does not justify its classification as an essential war activity. This playful industrial skirmishing has other results detrimental to the National interest. The best labour must be retained by unauthorised rates of wages and enticing bonuses, irrespective of the firm's immediate needs. In the sphere of costing and prices the future as well as the present stability of the firm has to be considered. We must provide for improbable as well as for probable contingencies. We must purchase materials in the market offering best credit terms and most attractive discounts; quality, suitability and transport distances are secondary considerations. National and private interests are not even consistently identical in matters affecting quality of work and speed of production. Entertainment and other mild forms of bribery are not entirely excluded from this industrial scramble.

There are other dangerous elements. To obtain a contract, a firm may submit a dangerously low quotation in the hope of squeezing an ultimate profit by using some manoeuvre or camouflage to get inferior material or inferior workmanship accepted by the inspecting departments. Quick and inefficient technicians are preferred to the less quick but more efficient. The question is not how well can this man work but how quickly. Full advantage is not taken of the general willingness to work overtime because firms cannot afford to pay overtime wage rates on ordinary contracts. Managements must arrange that overtime rates are paid only on "cost plus" contracts. This is not unpatriotic, it is simply commonsense as dictated by economic necessity.

As a managing director I must perforce keep a constant watchdog eye on profit rather than production and give my efforts to securing the greatest measure of future financial stability. I do not want to do these things. My real desire is to work hard, be a reasonably good citizen and enjoy the cultural facilities of good friends, good books, good music and such other things as appeal to me as good and are not anti-social. Neither I nor my co-directors have any burning desire to beat the other fellow nor do we get any pleasure from doing so. At a critical time like the present, the personal considerations, inseparable from competition, become an irritating waste of energy and purpose, a waste which the paltering, piecemeal and palsied policy of the Government forces upon many hundreds of managing directors. One must assume that this will continue while we hold personal interest as the sacred basis of individual war effort. That winning the war can be the first and main consideration of the breadwinning war worker is the delusion of the war orators.

Again, the official responsible for allotting contracts and dealing with innumerable queries connected with them, has little or no technical knowledge of the vital products with which he is dealing. His conscientious and urbane qualities do not compensate him for this lack of practical knowledge. In spite of recent improvements delay and irritation arise from the chain of officialdom which intervenes between the manufacturer making the article and the Government service requiring it.

The remedy for much of this chaos is industrial conscription, or at least the compulsory grouping of firms. The small firm made to lose its identity as a separate unit and to become effectively an integral part of the big firm contracting for the completed aeroplane, tank, etc. There should then be fewer contracts for officials to bungle, closer contact between technicians, and above all, fewer forms to complete. Then managers and men could "go to it" in a vigorous spirit of co-operation.

A. H. BROCKHURST

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

SIR,—Why does Critic assume that the howling down of Ellen Wilkinson in Trafalgar Square was Communist tactics? Such an action would have been contrary to C.P. policy and the Communists are a disciplined party.

May I quote an experience of mine which throws doubt on Critic's assumption? I attended an Anglo-Soviet Friendship Meeting on Saturday last in the Conservative Club, Windsor. Albert Inkpin was speaking, and when he stated that if the Government were to find it possible, somehow, to relieve the pressure on the Russians, the people of this country would welcome it, the Conservative M.P. for this division interrupted him and, on the plea that he had to leave the meeting, took the opportunity of assuring the audience that everything possible was being done. This was greeted with cries of derision, and mention was made of the ban on the *Daily Worker* by at least one member of the audience. Communists obviously! But the gesticulations of Albert Inkpin on the platform, and the anger depicted on the faces of people known to me as Communists as they turned towards the interrupters of the M.P., were evidence to me of the error of this superficial judgment.

JOHN PROCTER

SIR,—London Labour Party's letter to M. Maisky reveals a crucial political situation. I was one of the crowd on the North Side, the Ellen Wilkinson side, and there is no doubt whatever that the "interrupters" had the full sympathy of the crowd. What has now happened is that the platform disowns the crowd. In London Labour Party's view it would have been a "good" demonstration if only the demonstrators had been different; a public opinion is "good" so long as Gallup Polls don't show a 14 per cent. drop in support for the Government's conduct of the war. S. F. WATERS

BRITISH HERRENVOLK

SIR,—Along with many others, I was pleased to hear Lord Moyne say at the Royal Empire Society last week that "if we are fighting for liberty, we could not set the bounds to the advance of other races. We must avoid any reproach that when we blamed Hitler for his poisonous doctrine of the *Herrenvolk*, we had a similar doctrine lurking in our own hearts." Mr. Geo. Hall was also reported to have said that the Colonial Office is determined to break down the Colour Bar. These pronouncements are most encouraging.

I was, however, surprised to receive a letter from the Secretary of State for the Dominions about the same time informing me that the "Southern Rhodesian Land Apportionment Act had already been passed and assented to . . . and came into operation on the 1st of August." This act, as you have already observed in your columns, Sir, further endorses the policy of segregation upon which the Colony embarked in 1930, although in the intervening period it has proved itself impossible to maintain in practice. I fail to see how anyone can regard it as a fair apportionment when some 30 per cent. of the admittedly worst lands are reserved for 1¼ million Africans and 60 per cent. of the best lands for 69,000 Europeans. How does this square with the statements reported in the first paragraph of this letter? HAROLD A. MOODY,

Founder and President The League of Coloured Peoples.

164 Queen's Road, London, S.E.15.

FREE ALLIES

SIR,—The ideas expressed by "Pioneer" in your issue of the 1st November cannot be considered as universally applicable. As pointed out in an excellent contribution to your issue of the 12th July by Miss Eleanor Rathbone, the German refugees in this country consist of two categories, viz., political and religious refugees on the one hand, and Jews of all kinds of political convictions on the other. The first group desires to return to their German mother country after military defeat and political revolution have swept away the Nazi régime. They have a right to speak for the German people, and their most appropriate place in this war would seem to be a Free German fighting force, as Lt.-Col. Kahle has pleaded most convincingly in your issue of the 27th September, and not the Pioneer Corps. The second group, the Jews, do not want to return to Germany, generally speaking, for various strong reasons which need not be discussed in this connection. They have accordingly no right to speak for any section of the German public. Their natural place as soldiers is in H.M. Forces.

The case of the Austrian refugees may not be quite analogous since there are probably a good many Jews among them who are Austrian patriots in the true sense, and it is furthermore complicated by their not unjustified suspicion against the intentions of the so-called Austria Office which does not truly represent either of the two groups.

Every person with honest intentions will agree with "Pioneer" that any recruiting from the Pioneer Corps for a Free German or Free German-Austrian force should be done on a voluntary basis. But neither should the opportunity be denied to the *German* Anti-Fascists to fight in their own units for the political and social liberation of the country which is theirs, though no longer mine.

GUNTER W. WRZESZINSKI

ARMS AND THE MAN

SIR,—"Gunner R.A." asks why details of the school to which an O.C.T.U. candidate went, perhaps years ago, have to be entered on his form of application.

I suggest that one reason is that members of the Interview Board may be helped, at least a little, in their most difficult task and be able to say, "We refuse 'A' because, with Eton and Oxford behind him, he ought to make a better showing; there must be something lacking in him. But we accept 'B' because, though at present he is no better than 'A,' he must have more in him to have got to what he is without any educational advantages. 'A,' in fact, is on the down-grade while 'B' is going up."

At least that is what I used to say when I was

PRESIDENT OF AN INTERVIEW BOARD

SIR,—"A Soldier in Two Wars" claims that "the consideration to which most weight is given (*re* the granting of commissions) is meritorious active service. "What about the thousands of Commissions that are granted to men who have seen certainly no "active" service, and actually very

little service of any kind? Surely this happens in the majority of cases. But what of the really capable, intelligent men who get no chance at all to show their capabilities? The writer's claim that "C.O.s prejudices do not escape detection and rebuke" is tommy-rot! The worst aspect of the whole business is the fact that you are at the mercy of your C.O. absolutely, whether you are ever given an opportunity of appearing before the Selection Board. Without his permission there is no appeal and no redress. And the prejudices of C.O.s are real, and unfortunately, only too prevalent. I know several actual instances where men are put off with a pseudo-fatherly "Yes, my boy, I'll see to it—but don't you think you'd better wait three months more and get more experience?" Of potato-peeling and guards presumably? Or the "Old Boy" will say "Certainly, I'll put it forward, you'll hear very shortly!" and nothing happens for months and months, despite frequent enquiries. My own brother is a University Graduate, and, I believe, quite adequate in drill, etc., but he's heard nothing since applying in January. Worse still, he knows that, because of his application, no promotion has come to him since—this was conveyed, and not too subtly, by his S.M.

And there is the other case, the many hundreds of men who will not put their names forward for consideration because of their financial position. Yes, I know that assistance can be obtained, but how many people are going to throw themselves on the tender mercies of a "means test"? Before I will agree to call the system of selection democratic, I want to see:

(1) That every man has the right of an interview before the Selection Committee—irrespective of his C.O.'s consent.

(2) That men are really encouraged to apply, and not made to feel that they are damned impudent to think they are good enough.

(3) That the allowances and pay are so adjusted to enable ability and personality to be the deciding factor, and remove all doubts of being able to make ends meet.

CORPORAL

AMATEUR STRATEGY

SIR,—With reference to your comment at the bottom of my letter which appeared in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of October 25th, 1941, I write to say that contrary to your supposition, I do not know of any person in a responsible position who believes it was possible to carry out a Western offensive on a large scale during the past few months.

STEPHEN KING-HALL

MISPRINTS

SIR,—My attention has but just been directed to Mr. Bertram Carter's letter to you in the issue of Oct. 25th. If, as he suggests, "Critic" should think of including in an anthology the Calypso misprint in *Everyman's Encyclopaedia* he ought to point out that the error, which occurred in the 1911 edition, has long since been corrected (see 1931-32 edition, Vol. III). I am surprised that your correspondent has only "just come across" the slip, for he has been in possession of his volume for 30 years.

EDITOR OF *Everyman's Encyclopaedia*
J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

"DISTANT POINT"

SIR,—Your dramatic critic, in his review of *Distant Point* at the Westminster Theatre, wrongly attributed the production of the play at Unity Theatre to Mr. Herbert Marshall.

In fact, the play was produced in 1940 by Mr. Eric Capon, and the revival this year was substantially the same, the only alterations made being the changes in pace and emphasis in certain episodes. For the revival Mr. Marshall gave us the benefit of his advice, but his film commitments prevented him from accepting responsibility for the production.

R. V. BESTE,
Secretary
Unity Theatre Society Limited.

TRANSPORT

SIR,—A heavy vehicle driver (of a six-wheeler, I think) told me at a roadside tavern near here that he was taking a load of parts from Birmingham to a sea coast town for Government inspection. After they had been inspected he would take them back to Birmingham again.

And when they were there they were there, there, there, and when at Brum at Brum; and when they were only half-way there, they were neither there nor at Brum.

EBBE WALKER

SCHOOL FEEDING

SIR,—May I draw attention to the fact that although the impression is given in the press that all children can obtain cheap milk and cheap meals, in reality private schools are excluded? The same applies to many other non-educational advantages, such as the provision of air-raid shelters, medical service, etc. It is reasonable that the Board of Education, having only partial control over the education in private schools, should not make any grant towards it, but I maintain that on the subject of feeding and civil defence private school children should receive equal consideration with others. I know these points to be true because I am the Principal of a non-grant aided school and I have made application to every conceivable authority in vain.

I may say that I have built shelters for my 110 boys and collected about half the cost in subscriptions from the parents, but that the remaining outlay I am not even allowed to put down as a necessary expenditure for income-tax relief.

W. H. JONES, Principal
Grammar School for Boys,
Hayle.

ARMY EDUCATION

SIR,—As a civilian lecturer to the Forces I have been interested to read the comments you have published in your correspondence columns and elsewhere on the new Army Bureau of Current Affairs. I am sure that everyone connected with army education welcomed this new step, but some of us hesitate to call it "this startling new movement for general education in citizenship."

Very few of the units that I have visited recently have started to operate the scheme. The difficulties mainly arise through the lack of machinery. At the present time the officers in the units are expected to give the lectures, based on material issued fortnightly by the A.B.C.A. This is, I believe, regarded by the officers as an imposition. Especially in small units the officer has little time for the preparation that such lectures and discussions entail, and he can hardly be blamed if he finds excuses for postponing or cancelling them. Even when regular lectures and discussions are held, the lecture is often read out of the pamphlet and the discussion is closed as quickly as possible. I have heard from the south that notices have been posted to the effect that while discussion should be encouraged, it must not be allowed to develop into political discussion. Can anyone tell me how to discuss current affairs without referring to politics? Why, the bulletins issued from the A.B.C.A. are full of politics!

I feel that the only way to operate schemes of this kind is through a very much enlarged Army Education Corps, able to provide trained personnel to all units with sufficient authority to enable them to insist upon education as an essential part of training. Until this is done the most imaginative plans will remain largely on paper.

ARTHUR BLENKINSOP

GESTAPO IN MÜNSTER

SIR,—The brave Bishop of Münster, whose name is Clemens August Graf von Galen, chose the words of his famous sermon more carefully than your translation suggests.

In his opening remarks he characterised England as being "the external enemy and military adversary"—a redundancy of expressions which makes sense only in the German original. There it reads "der äusser Feind und *Kriegsgegner*"; the latter word means not only "military adversary," but also and more often "opponent of war," a term widely used as the German translation of the, in every sense, foreign word "Pacifist."

B.A.

FAMILY ENDOWMENT

SIR,—I am writing on behalf of the Family Endowment Society to ask whether any of your readers would care to strengthen our speakers' panel. We get so many requests for speakers for meetings of every kind that it is difficult to satisfy them.

If anyone would like to volunteer, would they please communicate to the Secretary, Family Endowment Society, 19 Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.11?

EVA M. HUBBACK, Vice-Chairman

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE Romantic literature of diabolical mystery was suffering not from disbelief but from unbelief long before the last ten years, when reality began to provide horrors which left imagination limp. The Devil had been civilised away. All those monsters, ghosts, shadows and Other Selves which the Romantic movement borrowed from Germany's mediæval store of myth and tale —things like Frankenstein and the legend of the Golem, for example—have gone through the familiar European process of the last hundred years. The theatrical moral context of that literature has been whittled away by scientific scepticism and has become psychological. Think of the Freudian fantasies of *The Turn of the Screw*, Kafka's mysteries of claustrophobia, and Dostoevsky's doubles with their clear pointer to the unconscious (Professor E. H. Carr and, before him, the French critic, Lemaître, have both indicated a source of these "doubles" in German Romantic literature). But, looking again at the Gothic horrors, one is not altogether sure that the banishment of the Devil from this literature of self-torture has been a complete advantage. Against Monk Lewis, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or Eugène Sue we have to put the thriller without a meaning and the merely brainy business of clue-collecting and detection. We lost something more than "the creeps," I think, when the good old Devil, the sense of evil as a separate and visiting presence, was argued off the stage, where his exits and entrances had always been done in style. Will he come back? I suspect he will. So many of the conditions which introduced his symbolism into the early Romantic movement seem to be forming again. In the last ten years people have been conditioned to receive the tension of fear and horror in their imagination, and a period of fanatical dogma and mass hypnotism has opened new vistas of evil. We have seen absolute power absolutely corrupt. And if we do not rhetorically exaggerate the individual personality or soul as the Romantics did, and see in them the stage on which good and evil struggle, we have growing reason to be rhetorical about this struggle as it goes on in the personalities of races and nations. We have seen nations demoniacally possessed and have heard mass appeals for suffering, and hallucination. If the Devil will move with the times and become a mass-man or a mass-spirit, he has, I think, good literary prospects in a neo-Romantic revival.

Prophesyings of this kind are such a pleasure that it is hard to stop. They were suggested to me by reading for the first time *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Self-Justified Sinner*, by James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd."* This story was written about 1824, when the vogue for horrors was at its height; it has a startling subject and the uncommon advantage of a plain style, which is the making of the book and gives it the directness of a document. Elsewhere the Devil was inclined to call up too loud an orchestra in the prose of the period, and the orchestra got louder and louder as the century went on and the sense of evil became conventional; but the *Justified Sinner* is a tale by Poe stripped down to the sinister matter-of-factness of *Mrs. Veal*.

First of all, Hogg's book is a study in fanaticism and the fearful wickedness which can deceive the very elect. It is the story of the destruction of a personality and of how a man may become a monster of evil through aiming at too much goodness. Hogg turned to the fanatical period of the wars of religion for his material, and specifically to the doctrine of Predestination —that proud, logical, mad doctrine which perverted the primitive humility of the idea of salvation by grace. His theme anticipates, under less phantasmagorical treatments of course, a strain of Dostoevsky's: the meek becomes the conqueror, the masochist becomes the sadist and hankerer after mystical power and justification. Robert Wringhim, the bastard son of the Laird of Dalcastle, is a "double" before his time. God has ordained that men are born Elect or Damned. It cannot please God that the Damned exist to mar creation. Therefore it is the duty of the Elect to destroy the damned; being Elect they can, moreover, commit with impunity what, to lesser sophists, might seem to be crimes. The Elect are, in short, the *Herrenvolk*. And so we see Robert Wringhim sedulously spying on and persecuting his cheerful elder brother with the industry of a Gestapo agent, undermining his morale, and eventually murdering him. More murders follow and we watch his Devil-directed course through robbery, seduction, drunkenness, hallucination, and finally suicide. He has closed his mind and sold himself, unwittingly, to the Devil, who appears first as the murderer's ideal self, then as his more brilliant friend, and finally as his feared Prince and inescapable counsellor. All this is highly Romantic, but the merit of the portrait is that it is conceived in real terms. Robert Wringhim is not a symbol; he is a case and instance. Under Hogg's treatment, the Devil, with his too convenient habit of appearing everywhere and under any guise, is a personification of the psychological process going on in Wringhim's mind, but Hogg never fails to bracket unconscious motives with their conscious effects. The conviction that he is of the Elect does not come to the pusillanimous and sickly Robert until he discovers that he is a bastard; the discovery that he has an elder brother who is heir to the estates coincides with Robert's decision that this brother is one of the damned. Robert enjoys the reckless pride of the murderer, but by this time his fantasies—i.e., the casuistries of the Devil—themselves become reckless and pervasive, and, like those "doubles" of Dostoevski, who have no memory of their aberrations, he lives in a state of intoxication which hides reality from him. When he murders his mother and the girl he has seduced he is quite unaware that he has done so. Finally, the evil with which he persecutes turns and persecutes him until he is driven to destroy himself.

To the doctrinaire maniac Hogg opposes the plain, moralistic people who observe Robert Wringhim with less fear than they ought, and with dry, ironical distaste. They do not know his full story. They are to Wringhim what the dry shopkeeper was to *Mrs. Veal*, and in one scene, the interview between the old laird's housekeeper and a proud woman thief who is waiting in gaol to be hanged for robbery, Hogg shows himself a master of ordinary portraiture. Hogg uses this contrast of types with enormous skill. The book is divided into two parts and the tale is told twice, once from the outsider's point of view, and then from Wringhim's. This is old-fashioned in a way, but gaps, misleading clues and open verdicts are very cleverly left in the first part and are filled in later with sound dramatic effect. There are subtle differences in the two narratives, some of which show considerable penetration of the criminal mind; for example, a witness of Robert's murder of his brother sees Robert spring out of hiding and stab his brother in the back when he's engaged in an exhausting fight with another opponent. But, in writing his memoir, Robert describes how he came between the two opponents, calling out to them, and killed his brother *face to face*! The brother's opponent was, of course, the Devil, and he is an admirably managed mystery who reveals himself little by little, and as a psychological phenomenon he behaves with absolute correctness. However thoroughly he arranges everything, however efficiently he brings Robert to the scene of the next crime, he always leaves the act and responsibility to Robert's own hand. The *Justified Sinner* is a *tour de force*, a tale of crime properly domesticated to its scene.

The doing of evil that good may result, turning into doing evil from self-interest, is, I suppose, Hogg's subject. Totalitarian ideologies have made us familiar with it. Another Victorian novel, written in 1837, carries the theme a step further. I am thinking of *The Confessions of a Thug*, by Meadows Taylor.† This is a standard work on exotic crime and adventure, dealing with the secret brotherhood of Thugs who plundered the roads of India from the thirteenth century until the eighteen-thirties, murdering and secretly burying thousands of travellers every year. Meadows Taylor had interviewed scores of Thugs like the one so sympathetically but remorselessly portrayed in this book. It belongs to the class of saturated novel, one in which a writer has so familiarised himself with an alien material that it flows out copiously, clearly and with vigour. The survival of the book to-day is one more testimony to the decisive part which is played by choosing the right style. Nor is that a matter of chance. The discovery of the right style for a subject is really, for a writer, the discovery of himself, of his gifts and his limitations.

It is evident that Meadows Taylor was a man of enormous curiosity, and he makes his appetite ours. He takes the simple course of making one of the captured Thugs tell his own tale from childhood, when his parents and sister were murdered before his eyes on the road, through his own initiation into the sect, his first and second murder, and so on. The first murder is described in detail from the time when the victim is picked up in the bazaars and persuaded to trust himself to the robbers on his journey, to the staging of the crime and the careful disposal of the body. Before the first murder the youth is unable to take his eyes off the wretch whom every minute is bringing nearer to death, and the scene is indescribably dramatic and moving because of its simple truthfulness. By the time of the second murder the young man, who has been chosen to do it, avoids his victim as they journey together in the caravan, but gives an occasional glance at him as the day goes by. This note of "the occasional glance" is one of those small touches of verisimilitude which bring the whole episode home to us unforgettably. The meaning of the word Thug is "deceiver," and it was given to the sectaries because of their secrecy and subtlety in persuading travellers into their clutches. The brotherhood was religious, a free masonry which bound Hindu and Moslem together, and is said to have sprung from the famous Assassins of Peria, a schismatic body which, being driven underground and becoming a secret society, produced their "physical force men," who obtained power. It is the old story. Thuggee spread in India as provincial wars reduced society to anarchy, and Meadows Taylor's Thug says that "faith and brotherhood" were to be found in that profession alone, "unlike the false world." As a strangler he was horrified by bloodshed, and despised the common criminal; he was a skilled worker and almost the priest of a mystic rite. Once more the Elect are justified. But the Thug was more honest than Robert Wringhim; there was also the pleasure, the Thug said, of hunting, the supreme pleasure of hunting man himself. Secure in his Victorian armchair and in the Christian dispensation, Meadows Taylor disposes of prejudice and tells his accurate and disquieting story with the sublime disinterestedness of the British official at his best. He produced a document which is perhaps too long but which is still alive, though Thuggee is dead.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. James Hogg. A. M. Philpot.

† *The Confessions of a Thug*. By Meadows Taylor. World's Classics. 3s.

A TOPOGRAPHICAL ELIZABETHAN

The Works of Michael Drayton. Edited by J. W. HEBEL. Vol. V: Introductions, Notes, etc., edited by K. TILLOTSON and B. H. NEWDIGATE. *Blackwell.* 5 vols. £8 18*s.* 6*d.*

Michael Drayton and His Circle. By B. H. NEWDIGATE. *Blackwell.* 15*s.*

The Shakespeare Head Press at Oxford, which under the public-spirited and discriminating inspiration of Mr. Basil Blackwell has made a special place for itself with its reissues of Elizabethan classics, has now set the seal upon this work with the conclusion of its superb edition of Drayton, complete, authoritative, beautifully produced and printed. The editing, which was begun by an American Professor, has been completed by two devoted English scholars and is a masterpiece of minute and comprehensive scholarship. There can hardly be half a dozen English poets who have been so superlatively edited. Drayton, who was not so fortunate in the reception of his works in his own day, though always respected and esteemed, has been lucky three hundred years after his death. That such a work should have been produced at such a time makes one proud of the academic profession, in which one includes the scholarly publisher, who has made this work of piety and learning possible.

Not merely piety and learning, however: the discerning reader will discover a discreet and rewarding pleasure in the poetry of Drayton, a note cool and silvery, and for the most part calm and detached, as against the hot excitements of the Elizabethans *pur sang*. And his editors are right, too, in saying that "the study of the whole body of Drayton's work is important for those who love and who wish to understand the poetry of the English Renaissance." Mrs. Tillotson adds, more specifically, that "his age is even yet known too exclusively by its drama, its short poems, and the falsely isolated *Faerie Queene*." I think that is true. One can't, of course, read everything; but it is clear that we derive a very lopsided view of the Elizabethan Age from our schooldays and a very inadequate appreciation of the astonishing riches of its literature. That is very noticeable in the work even of so well-read and appreciative a critic of literature as Virginia Woolf—if you look at the Elizabethan essays in her *Common Reader*.

And Drayton is very much a case in point: one had no idea of how much of his total work was readable until this edition came along—he was previously so inaccessible. At the same time, though he was very different from the more recognisable type of the passionate Elizabethan, and less exciting, he was a very characteristic Elizabethan: his work touched the age at many points, as an artist he was extraordinarily impressionable—his weakness as well as his strength—so that you find him contributing in turn to nearly every form in vogue. He begins, so rightly for an Elizabethan, with an elegy on the death of Philip Sidney, goes on to spiritual songs and pastoral poems, *Idea the Shepherd's Garland*, inspired by Spenser, to a sonnet-sequence addressed to a lady such as was so popular in the Fifteen-Nineties (Shakespeare was more original); from that to a poem *Endimion and Phoebe*, which was his parallel to *Venus and Adonis*, and to *Piers Gaveston*, largely influenced by Marlowe's *Edward II*, the first of a long sequence of almost interminable poems dealing with various episodes in the past history of the country, which went on all through his life and which the mind boggles at the thought of reading. Flesh and blood couldn't stand it. Nevertheless, that does not dispose of Drayton: there is a great deal else which is very readable, including some even of the historical poems, for instance, the well-known and vigorous *Ballad of Agincourt*. We can regard the longer historical poems, *The Barons' Wars*, the *Legends* and *England's Heroical Epistles* as Drayton's parallel to Shakespeare's glorification of the nation's past, with the political lessons it bore, in the English history-plays; and leave it at that. They both spring from the same source: Holinshed's Chronicle; though Drayton was an altogether more learned poet, with an antiquarian, donnish mind, who did a vast amount of historical research on his own. (It was a mistake to put it into his poetry: he should have kept it for prose-works—which unfortunately he did not write. He had too high a sense of his own vocation as poet.)

What good reason Warwickshire has to be proud of its contribution to the Elizabethan Age: Michael Drayton born of yeoman stock at Hartshill, at one end of the Forest of Arden, in 1563; William Shakespeare, also of yeoman stock, born at the other end of the county and the Forest in 1564; Raphael Holinshed spending much of his life as steward in the house at Bramcote, a mile or so away from Polesworth, where Drayton was brought up in the house of the literature-loving Gooderes, friends, too, of Jonson and Donne. Mr. Newdigate has studied Drayton's career and these relations and their background in society with care and profit: he has brought to light some new facts about Drayton's connection with that hospitable household—from legal proceedings in the Public Record Office which have yielded us, under the persuasive hands of Professors Hotson and Sisson, so much of the new information gathered in late years about Shakespeare, Marlowe and other Elizabethans. Mr. Newdigate thinks that though Drayton and Shakespeare knew each other, they were not so familiar as has been supposed. That seems probable enough. Shakespeare was to an extraordinary degree a man of the theatre, absorbed in his occupation, and his circle was a different one from Drayton's. Drayton's tribute to Shakespeare, among other contemporaries, though friendly and respectful, is not particularly enthusiastic. It is extraordinary that his contemporaries seem to have had no conception of his transcendent superiority over them all. Mr. Newdigate thinks it just possible Drayton may have been the rival poet of the Sonnets; if so, the young man would have been Walter Aston. It does not seem probable, and it brings one up against the most tantalising, and the most fascinating, problem in our literature. What would one not give for a little certain information about the characters of the Sonnets? One would willingly give the whole of the *Poly-Olbion* for a brief exchange of letters between Drayton and Shakespeare throwing some light on the story behind the Sonnets.

For fifteen years after Shakespeare's death Drayton lived on, constantly producing. The great grief of his life was the failure of his *Poly-Olbion*, an enormous poem intended to be *the* English Epic, but which only succeeds in being like one of those vast Elizabethan houses, Audley End or Burghley, elaborate, rambling, ingenious, out of all sense of proportion that we can appreciate, like their clothes, their farthingales, their ruffs, bedizened with jewels, their furniture, their mazes, their tangled walks.

But, I repeat, there is a great deal of Drayton that has its own silvery charm, besides strangely effective poems like *The Moon-Calf*, which is more like Swift or a picture by Hieronymus Bosch than it is like one's idea of Drayton. What is wanted now, to complete our conquest, is a manageable short volume containing all the best of him with an Introduction: something like what Matthew Arnold did for Wordsworth

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EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE

would have meant nothing to Hilaire's wife, *née* Swanton, a relation of the artist, Chassériau, a friend of Lamartine and Stendhal, and author of a respectable book on Byron. Brilliant and affectionate, her nature and behaviour contradict the view that French people are necessarily hard and money-grubbing. When her invalid son, Louis, announced his intention of marrying his mother's little English friend, Bessie Parkes, the fact that the latter was something of an heiress did not prevent Mme. Belloc, who was fond of Bessie but perhaps distrusted her feminism and the influence of Mme. Bodichon, from conscientiously pointing out to her all the disdavantages of the match. This disinterested course brought its own reward: Louis Belloc was evidently a sweet young man and his wife continued to adore not only himself but his mother and both his sisters.

The picture Mrs. Belloc Lowndes draws of the little house at La Celle St. Cloud will ring a bell in the minds of all who know the environs of Paris: the milieu is beautifully complete, the characters vitally agreeable and clearly seen, and the main line of history lies only just beyond the garden wall. Michelet had once been Louis Belloc's tutor; Napoleon's illegitimate son, M. Sainte-Hilaire, often came to call; and Mme. Swanton Belloc's *dame de compagnie*, Adelaide de Montgolfier, was the daughter of the balloon inventor who had conversed with Louis XVI. A most entertaining figure, this little old lady was always quoting Racine and Corneille, found Dickens personally disappointing (Gavarni had thought him, one remembers, "*d'une vanité énorme et paralysante*") and paradoxically considered the Empress Eugénie not beautiful but "intelligent and good." Unlike the high-souled Bellocs, Mlle. de Montgolfier never really recovered from the shock and horrors of the 1870 war and the Commune, the account of which events (given of course mainly from the Versailles point of view) adds considerably to the interest and value of the book. For it bears witness that, during the siege of Paris, the Germans behaved with the same senseless barbarity—defiling and burning private property, bombing hospitals, and so forth—which has characterised them, with increasing intensity, ever since. The Bellocs returned to La Celle after the war to find nothing but the walls of their house standing, but Mme. Swanton Belloc undaunted.

The family anxiety as to the probable impotence of Louis Belloc proved unfounded, though he did not live long to enjoy his two children, Hilaire and the authoress of this book. Mrs. Belloc Lowndes's memory has served her well, and though her material sometimes wears rather thin, producing an effect of diffuseness, her characters and their story never fail to hold our sympathy. The intelligence and charm of mind displayed in these memoirs are, however, but ill served by a style which is "homely" to the point of slovenliness. And surely it was very extravagant on the part of the publishers to have spread the book, by means of a lavish style of printing, over 390 pages, just at a time when the paper stocks in the country are well below our needs.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE SECOND RISORGIMENTO

The Remaking of Italy. By PENTAD. *Penguin.* 6*d.*

The five anonymous authors of this book, of whom one is English and the others Italian, have written an excellent manifesto of what one hopes will be the second Risorgimento of Italy. It suffers a little from distractedness and disorderliness which are probably due to multiplicity of authors. But, by and large, it is just the kind of politico-historical book which will feed and may stimulate the brains of the large Penguin public. The authors begin with history, taking us in stages from the break-up of the Western Empire in 476 to the establishment of Austrian dominion in 1748, then through the abortive struggles of 1848 and the Risorgimento to the making of Italy. Part II contains the lamentable history of the relations between Germans and Italians, the continual struggle of the "Tedeschi" to dominate and of the Italians to free Italy. For some 1,500 years the struggle has been going on and during that time the Italians have been allowed to be masters in their own house for perhaps a century. Hitler is shown to us as the latest German master of Italy, and the ancient cry of "Out with the Germans" (*Fuori i tedeschi*) is heard once more on the lips of the men of the Second Risorgimento. Then comes a section, pleasant reading for the Briton by its contrast, on the relations between the English and the Italians. But it is pleasant only because it is confined to the statesmen and policy of despised Victorian Liberalism, Palmerston, Gladstone, and John Russell, and stops at 1914. Later on in the book we are shown what a prominent part two blind, obstinate and narrow-minded Englishmen, the brothers Chamberlain, Austen and Neville, played in fastening upon Italians the fetters of Fascism, and so ultimately of Hitler and his Tedeschi.

This pre-Fascist history occupies nearly two-thirds of the volume. The remaining pages contain an admirable account and analysis of the Mussolini regime and a sketch of the new Italy which will rise out of the ashes of Fascism. The authors maintain that the vast majority of the Italian people have always been opposed to the Fascist dictatorship and, true to tradition, in favour of free institutions. There are people in this country who will not agree, but there is a great deal to be said for the view of Pentad. It was impossible to travel in Germany and Italy during the height of Hitler's and Mussolini's power without seeing how different was the Italian reaction to blatant and triumphant dictatorship from the German. The Sienese crowd watched the noisy, Sunday Fascist procession pass through their ancient streets amused, but aloof, critical, slightly cynical; the hundreds of good Germans who lined the streets in Bonn to watch the Nazis and Goering go marching by were genuinely and hotly enthusiastic. One felt that there was something more profound than the surface emotionalism of a crowd in this difference, and one's feeling of the moment—it was only a few years, but seems like a century, ago—is confirmed by the Italian who in these pages now analyses the relations between the Fascist regime and the Italian people from the murder of Matteotti until the conqueror of Abyssinia became the cringing jackal of Hitler.

And to-day? To-day, the authors of this book maintain, Mussolini and his Corporative State are hated only one degree less than the Germans and the German war. This view may be slightly tinged by the psychology of refugeeism, but all the evidence shows that the exaggeration of hope is, in this case, slight and that, if any of Hitler's enslaved populations are ripe for rebellion, it is the Italian. The moral of this part of the book for the reader is that it makes him long impatiently for the strategy of revolution to be applied intelligently and ruthlessly by our Government to Italy and its discredited Government.

The last section of the book, which attempts to draw the outline of a new and free Italy, is the least satisfactory. With much of what the author says, every democrat and socialist can agree, but the governmental system which he proposes seems to be based upon the fallacious idea that it is possible in modern society to separate economics from politics. For the publicist to try to cure the diseases of society by separating economics from politics is just about as sensible as for a physician to try to cure an individual by separating his body from his mind—and would have much the same effect.

LEONARD WOOLF

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peace are two ways of describing the same operation. This pamphlet is No. 13 in a series called "The Democratic Order," and the series is being published in order to help onward "the forward march of the common people in all lands towards their just and true inheritance" (The Prime Minister). It has a special importance in the series because, to quote Francis Williams, "this is a war of ideas; a revolutionary war fought to determine the future of European civilisation," and propaganda, or political warfare, is the battle of the brains in which ideas are the ammunition. In the first three chapters Mr. Kingsley Martin discusses in turn "How Ideas Work," "Ideas in the Last War" and "Hitler's Propaganda." He shows that the peace settlement in 1919 was a reflection of the propaganda which did so much to undermine German morale, but he stresses the fact, and it is an all-important fact, that the effect of the propaganda in the last war was much more far-reaching than its immediate consequence during the war. As he rightly says: "If you undermine the enemy and encourage your own civilian population by false and conflicting promises, you are laying the foundations of a peace made on the basis of lies, and you run grave risks of seeing your work shattered by the reaction which follows the exposure."

The concluding thirty pages deal with the subject of British propaganda both as regards content and method. The author seems to have finished his work before the recent announcement about the Political Warfare Executive, and he writes as if the Ministry of Information were our Political Warfare Department. It is not. It ought to be, but the Prime Minister has ruled otherwise. The Political Warfare Executive is a Committee of anonymous officials who report to a committee of three Ministers (Foreign Office, Ministry of Information and Ministry of Economic Warfare). We do not know how this strange mixture or their officials work in with the Chief of Staffs Committee, and we have been told in Parliament that if we ask a question on this subject we shall not be given the answer. Was there ever such nonsense! How on earth can anyone pretend that it is not in the public interest for Parliament and the Nation to receive an assurance that when the three Chiefs of Staff sit down to plan an operation, or discuss the war strategy, there is a fourth man present who puts the case for Political Warfare. This fourth man is at present non-existent. He is represented by two committees. The new machinery is perhaps a slight improvement on the chaos which it superseded, but it falls far short of what is required.

So much for machinery. What about the content of our propaganda? Mr. Kingsley Martin has no difficulty in showing that "exactly as in the last war, Britain is to-day engaged in advancing two lines of propaganda which are mutually exclusive." On the one hand, the eleven broadcasts which are sent out to the German people each day transmit material which assumes that there are listeners in Germany who, "if Nazi success dwindles, if hardship and suffering grow, if it becomes obvious that the Germans cannot win the war . . . will grow more bold, accentuate the grumbling and the weariness of war, and in time become a Fifth Column inside the Third Reich." On the other hand, the notion that this is a war against the German people as a whole and that no distinction must be made between Nazis and Germans is also growing. If this view prevails we shall most certainly reproduce the mistakes of 1919. Mr. Kingsley Martin indicates clearly which should be our choice between these two alternatives. We must provide an agenda for controversy inside Germany. One of the difficulties which our Political Warfare has to overcome is the belief held by many Germans that they were tricked into surrender by Wilson's fourteen points. The author of *Propaganda's Harvest* has faith in the propaganda value of the Charter of the Atlantic. I am less hopeful. Something much more definite than the Charter of the Atlantic will be needed before we can build up in Germany and Italy the Allied Fifth Column.

It is in Italy that we should start our Political Warfare offensive on the grand scale, partly because we have 500,000 Italians in our hands, partly because the material is easier to work on than is German opinion, partly because it is in this area that we are most likely to be able to combine effective military operations and propaganda. As Mr. Kingsley Martin stresses repeatedly, it is essential that our story should be consistent at home and abroad. The story for abroad must be a forward-thinking and progressive alternative to Hitler's so-called New Order. It must convince people that our purpose is not only to destroy Nazism but to replace it with something better than the 1919-1939 set-up. It is when we have to decide the particulars (not the principles) of what we are fighting for as contrasted with what we are fighting against, that differences of opinion arise on our home front. National unity dependent upon a refusal to face up to this issue will be a sham as soon as we pass out of the period of "fighting for survival." We must therefore make up our minds as to the kind of Europe we and the Americans, the Russians and our Allies wish to create after the Nazis are extirpated. Until we do this, the hour of victory will not only be needlessly delayed, but in the widest sense of the word "Victory" it will not be reached. *Propaganda's Harvest* helps to direct attention to this vital aspect of the war.

STEPHEN KING-HALL

FAMILY ALBUM

A Short History of the Montagu-Puffins. By C. E. VULLIAMY. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

To read this book is almost as enjoyable as it must have been to write it. Mr. Vulliamy, whose interest in the nineteenth century is evidently intense, has exploited his remarkable knowledge with ingenuity. His book describes five generations of an imaginary family in the form not of a Galsworthian "saga" but of a biographical history. His purpose is to plot a graph characteristic of many Victorian families and also to exhibit the various forms taken by inherited qualities through some 180 years. He is not trying to exemplify any particular thesis, and consequently the verisimilitude of the story more than makes up for what it may seem to lack in purpose: the reader is left the pleasure of drawing his own conclusions. But Mr. Vulliamy does treat us to a running commentary on characters and events, written in a fluent, chatty style. It is possible that the result would have been more pungent if he had assumed the more dignified manner usual among writers of family histories. His book would thus have been a satire on biography as well as a satire upon past manners and beliefs.

This fictitious family of Puffin begins with an illegitimate child, born in 1754, who attains success in retail trade; his son increases the prosperity of the hat-shop, while his daughter thrives as a kept woman; of his grandsons, one extremely rich, is municipally eminent and marries into the aristocracy, the other is a brave and capable soldier; the next generation of Puffins, now possessing the station of gentry, include a country squire, a dean, a doctor and a decadent aesthete; these are succeeded by another country squire and a man of letters; in the last generation the male line is extinct, but the virtues of the stock persist in a Civil Servant, the granddaughter of the first Puffin's grandson. The buoyant, energetic, ambitious character of their common ancestor emerges in almost all his descendants, despite the admixture of genes carrying either more stolid or more cynical dispositions. The worst of the Puffins are worthless, the best are admirable, and a tendency to optimism is almost universal. In all but the best, the optimism takes the form of fraudulent boasting, and a family pride dependent upon more or less conscious mendacity.

The extent of his canvas enables Mr. Vulliamy to include a delightful variety of incident, and every page is written with care and gusto. The book is enriched with an elaboration of Victorian detail, in which I have detected only one glaring anachronism: the word "platoon" recently revived was not current in the nineteenth century. Mr. Vulliamy suffers from a prejudice against country squires, for he depicts a monster

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and declares him to be typical. He is harsh, also, to the clergy. (The parody of Kilvert's Diary is most amusing, though unfair in so far as sets out to be an implicit criticism.) Otherwise he disciplines his native zest for satire, and avoids the easy jeers at Victorianism to which some smart Alicks are so much addicted. All readers interested in the social history of the last two hundred years will therefore find his book an uncommonly enjoyable *jeu d'esprit*.

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

MODERN GREECE

A Short History of Modern Greece. By E. S. FORSTER. *Methuen.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The Professor of Greek in the University of Sheffield is not only familiar with Greece and with most of the books that have been written about it, but had the advantage of serving as an intelligence officer on the Salonica front, an experience which gave him an exceptional opportunity of watching the reactions between diplomatic and military moves during that painful period of the last war, occupying nearly a third of the whole book. The intrigues of King Constantine with the Kaiser, the rallying of the Greek people round their great Cretan leader, Venizelos, as soon as Constantine had been expelled, the consequent hatred of the dynasty and of the Royalist Party which pursued Venizelos till his death in exile in 1936: all this, as well as the rise of the modern Kingdom of the Hellenes on the ruins of their Turkish prison, is drily and soberly chronicled; although the author, perhaps for good reasons, does not underline the dramatic pattern of the theme: that Colonel John Metaxas, who started the feud between Royalists and Venizelists by his resignation in 1915, should have become the dictator General Metaxas who ended the feud by his defiance of Germany when the Italians attacked Greece in 1940. In spite of his familiarity with the facts and the country, Professor Forster, it must be admitted, has a remarkable capacity for not startling the reader by anything unexpected; but he has the compensating virtues of impartiality and concision. His book gives the objects and the attitudes; and anyone who wants to add colour to the picture should read with it Miss Dilys Powell's *Remember Greece*, which was reviewed in these pages a few months ago. In his final chapter on "The Greeks of To-day" he says nothing about their literature, and he seems to know little about the modern language. This unfamiliarity, or perhaps a misunderstanding of one of his authorities, may be responsible for the only mistake I have noticed: the fanatical Chamber of the Constantinian restoration of 1921 (p. 139), so far from favouring the "popular" language, again banished it from the schools, to which Venizelos had been the first to admit it.

JOHN MAVROGORDATO

Week-end Competitions

No. 614

Set by Audrey Hilton

We offer the usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half-a-guinea for the best description in rhyming slang of a railway journey, a shopping expedition, a visit to Madame Tussaud's or an incident in the House of Commons. Limit, 150 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, December 17th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 611

Set by Alan Dent

Competitors are invited to submit the likeliest set of six disjointed remarks overheard in the course of a walk along the Strand. Entries must not exceed 250 words in all.

Report by Alan Dent

Disappointment is too mild a word for my emotion in reading through the entries for this competition. They were numerous enough, but they were nearly all poor and/or unlikely. The competition was suggested to my mind by eight disjointed remarks which I did actually overhear in the course of a walk along the Strand on a busy afternoon towards dusk. I noted them, there and then, on the back of an envelope, and they were these:—

(1) Oh, cheer up, wench, cheer up!

(2) —— she bowed very polite, but I didn't take no notice——.

(3) —— and don't you forget, I saw it first!

(4) He always used to say I giggled too much, and ——

(5) —— far more than Winnie's. Winnie's irritates me.

(6) I don't think she wanted us to know who she was.

(7) She always referred to him as "our friend"—I was grateful to her for that.

(8) I'll tell your Reg all about you when he comes out, see if I don't. . . .

These are actual and factual, not invented. I have forborne to improve. I should have liked, for example, to have substituted "back" for "out" in No. 8. But "out" is what I heard. I expected scores of remarks even more dramatically suggestive than these. I got very few.

I recommend that a First and only prize go to Olive Conway, because her set of six is several streets—and the whole of the Strand—ahead of everybody else's. Among the rank and file were several disqualifications. I said the Strand—not Charing Cross Station, or the Savoy's American Bar, or dark alleys in the blackout (and even the obscenities were not irresistibly funny!). I said "overheard"—which cuts out long sentences which could only be taken down by dint of deliberate eavesdropping. Some of the lists were fairly obviously authentic—like Nerissa's, and Leslie Johnson's, and Avalind's, and E. Aitken's, and Margerie Scott's—but these competitors seem to me to have been much less fortunate in their open-eared saunter than I was myself. One remark, by the way, was not at all original. I have long understood, and much prefer to believe, that "Wot I sez is 'e ought never to of married 'er!" was shouted through a porthole in the middle of the Battle of Jutland. For the rest, D. D. R. had one good remark about someone's taste being the taste of "a ror ronion"; Muriel Grainger's "Charing Cross is farther down than you'd think" has an admirable sense of time and space; Catherine Brebner's "But I *would* like a muffin to my tea with lots of butter in it!" has a universal poignancy; Nemesis's observation, heard near the Adelphi, will strike deep in certain quarters: "That's all very well, old boy, but I still don't see why I should go *on* paying you ten per cent.!" and BM/ECX's "I can't manage now, love. To-morrow I could stay all night" is very nice and exceedingly possible.

But only the prize-winner scored six bull's eyes. Her list seems to me to be perfect, nostalgic, choice. And I find it pleasant to guess at the exact spot or crossing at which each remark might so easily have been overheard.

FIRST PRIZE

(1) "Say, I thought this street had class and character. There's nothing to it."

(2) "—— when they came back from Canada. The drive to the Guildhall when she wore a grey hat with a blue feather and we had such a lovely view from over there, up that slope."

(3) "Yes, I know, Gertrude Lawrence at the Vaudeville and supper at Romano's—there's nothing like that this time."

(4) "Violets! Frank, I thought that train would never get in. Let's get some coffee at Lyon's; I'm cold."

(5) "Nothing but a newsreel theatre. Even the Tivoli's closed. Isn't it grim? Were they bombed out or what?"

(6) "—— of course it was Henry Lytton. Wonder what he'd think of the Russian opera? Funny, all those uniforms and handkissing. It doesn't seem right, not outside the Savoy. Remember the first time we saw *H.M.S. Pinafore* and you ——"

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